4

...OH, SORRY.

I WAS JUST RUMINATING ON THE ***RAGE*** I FELT EARLIER TODAY...

WAKE LISTEN TO ME!

HIROAKI SAMURA

HIROAKI

4

SAMURA

LISTEN
TO ME!

STORY & CAST

Sapporo, Hokkaido. One night at a bar, Minare Koda has her heartbroken ramblings secretly recorded by a local FM radio station director, Mato, who then airs the audio the following day. Minare storms into the station in a burst of fury, only to be duped by Mato into doing an impromptu talk show explaining her severe remarks. The segment turns out to be a big hit, leading Mato to make Minare an official offer to have her own show. And so begins the daily struggle to produce her shoestring operation of a radio program. One night, Minare meets with her senior Madoka Chishiro, who hands her the outline for a mysterious project…

Minare Koda

The protagonist. Lives in Sapporo, a bustling city on Japan's chilly, northern island of Hokkaido. Born and raised in the coastal city of Kushiro. Currently 26 and single. Her day job as a waitress at the soup curry restaurant VOYAGER is in jeopardy. Causes all sorts of trouble in trying to execute ideas for her show.

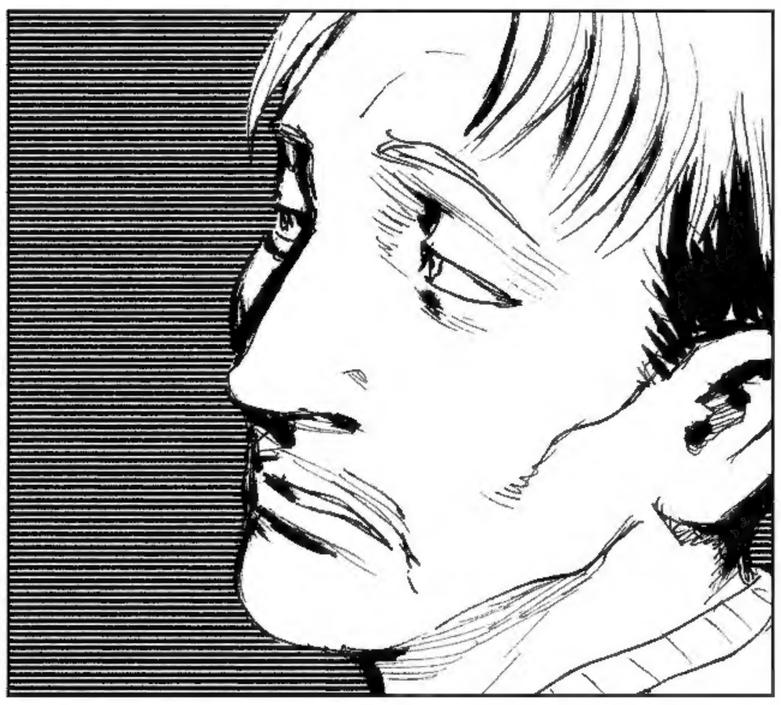
Wave, Listen to Me!

Mizuho Namba

Assistant director at MRS. Currently letting Minare stay with her after Minare was kicked out of her apartment. Really kind-hearted.

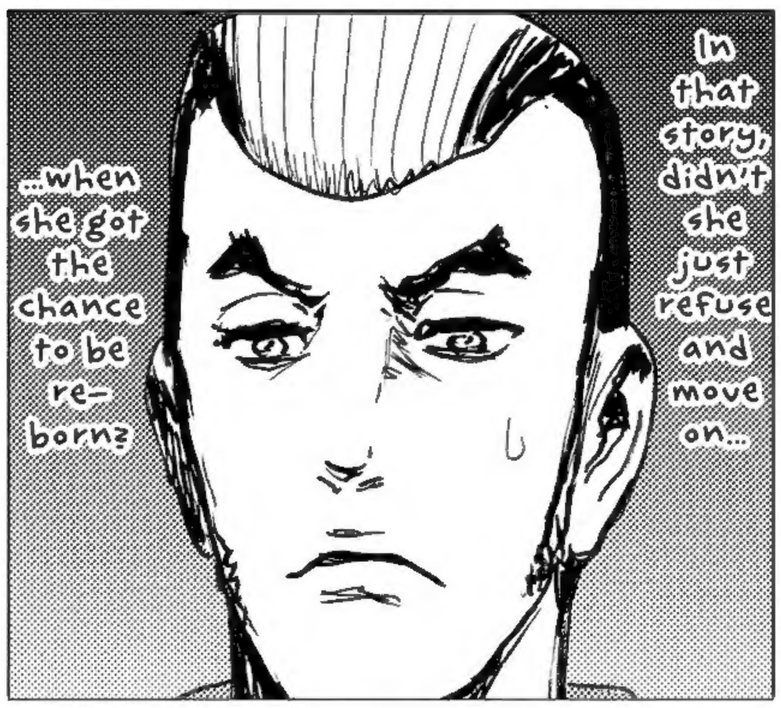
Kanetsugu Mato

A director at the FM station Moiwayama Radio (MRS). Saw potential in Minare's conversational ability and scouted her for the radio business.



Katsumi Kureko

A scriptwriter for MRS and a veteran of the industry. Primarily works as an erotica novelist. Supposedly goes way back with Mato.

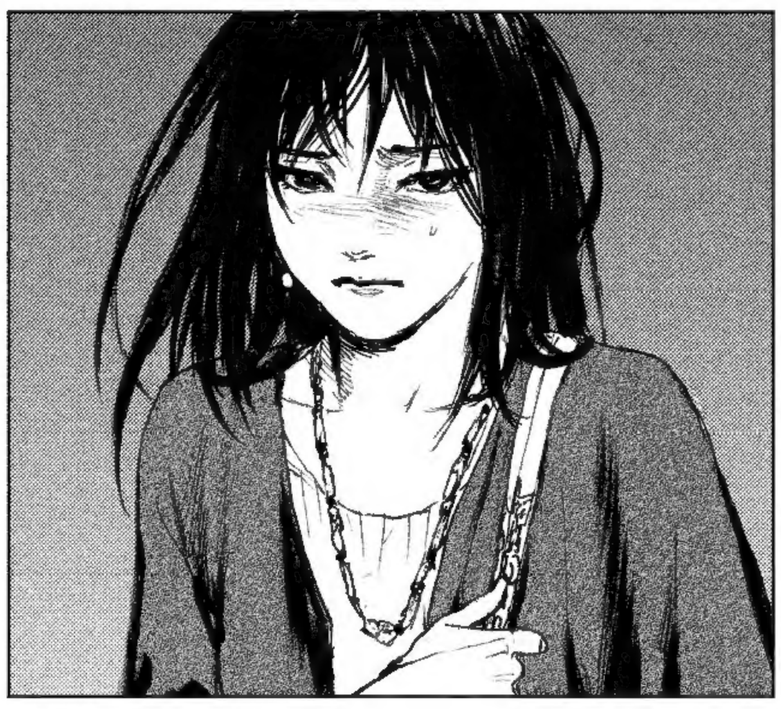


Chuuya Nakahara

An employee at VOYAGER. Supposedly in love with Minare, but invited Makie to stay at his place. She's still there now.

Madoka Chishiro

A radio host at Moiwayama Radio Station. Extremely skilled and has a good relationship with scriptwriter Kureko. A master at provocation.



Makie Tachibana

A beautiful woman working at VOYAGER to help pay for the car accident caused by her brother. Not the most skilled swordsperson in this manga, nor affiliated with the Itto-ryu.

Chapter 25 • "THE PARTY GOES ON." 005

Chapter 26 • "I CAN'T GO BACK THERE." 029

Chapter 27 • "THINGS WON'T PLAY OUT." 051

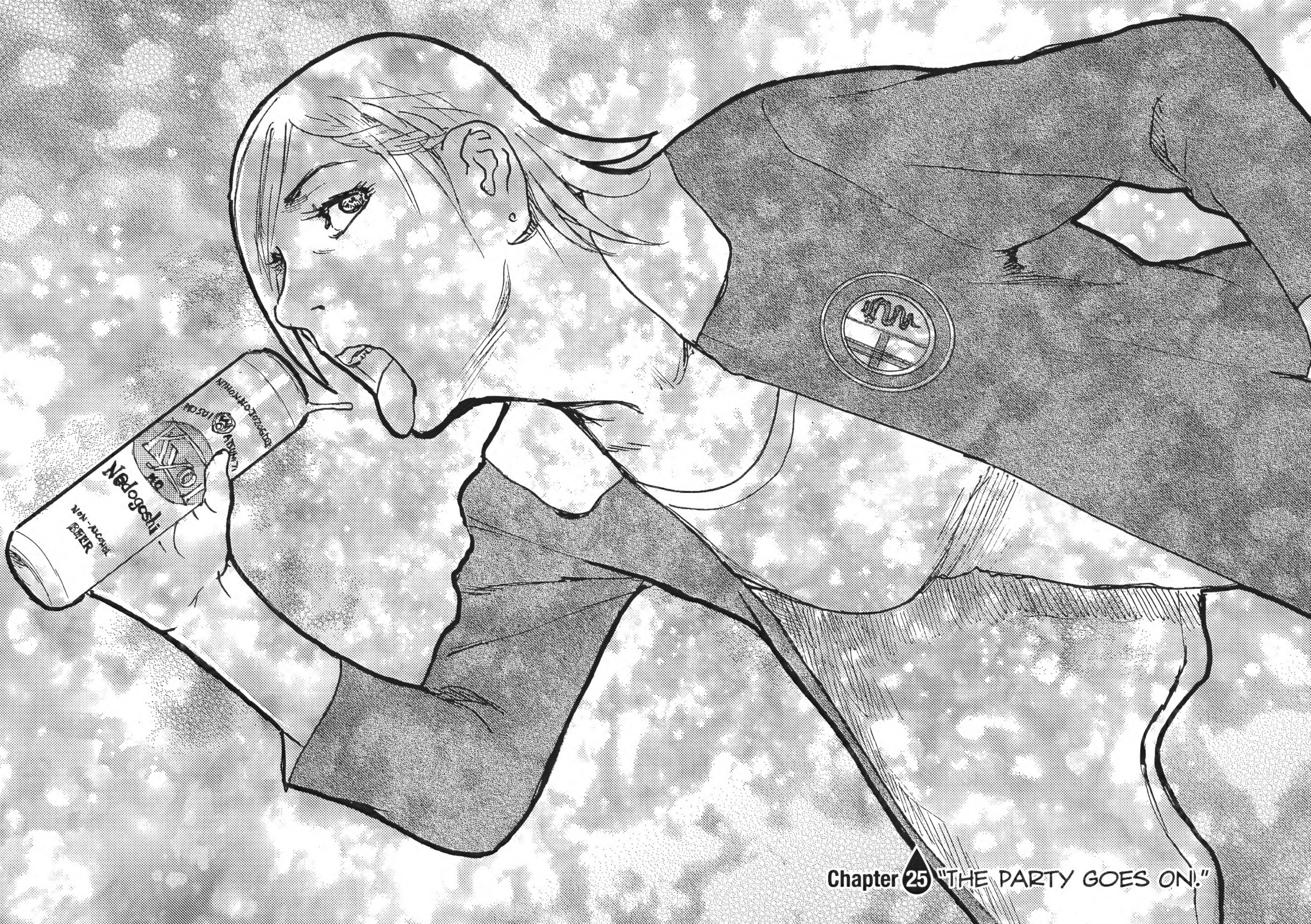
Chapter 28 • "I CAN'T TALK ABOUT IT OVER THE PHONE." 075

Chapter 29 • "YOU CAN'T SAVE EVERYONE." 097

Chapter 30 • "MY HEART WON'T REACH YOU." 121

Chapter 31 • "I WANT TO CHASE AFTER YOU." 143

Chapter 32 • "I DON'T WANNA GO WITH YOU." 167



Chapter 25 "THE PARTY GOES ON."

AN UN-EXPECTED ATTACK OF CHARACTER.

YOU'RE THE KIND OF NARCISSISTIC PERSON WHO'S ONLY INTERESTED IN YOURSELF, RIGHT?

AN UN-EXPECTED DOCUMENT.

PROJECT OUTLINE

2016

VALENTINE RADIO

...PARDON?

WHICH WOULD YOU PREFER I EXPLAIN FIRST?

UH... THE FILE, PLEASE.

ACTUALLY, THERE'S A LOT I WANNA ASK ABOUT!

ALSO, WHAT'S WITH THIS FILE?!

I CAN-NOT!

WHY ARE YOU TALKING LIKE THAT...?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

LET THAT SLIDE,

AND NOT JUST FOR MRS... OTHER AFFILIATE STATIONS ARE IN-VOLVED, TOO.

...IS A BIG EVENT SCHED-ULED FOR FEBRU-ARY NEXT YEAR.

AS THE NAME IMPLIES, *VALEN-TINE RADIO...*

VALENTINE RADIO

2016

PROJECT OUTLINE

...BEFORE MATO-SAN GETS FID-GETY AND TELLS YOU ABOUT IT HIMSELF, ANYWAY.

WELL, IT'S PROBABLY ONLY A MATTER OF TIME...

IT'S A PUBLIC EVENT IN WHICH FOUR POPULAR SPEAKERS SELECTED FROM EACH STATION DUKE IT OUT.

...MAYBE.

HUH?

Well, I was joking about the "duke it out" bit.

WELL, IT DOESN'T, RIGHT?

YOU'RE THINKING IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU, AREN'T YOU?

HUH...

...SO I WANT TO GIVE YOU A COPY, AT LEAST.

VALENTINE RADIO

2016

PROJECT OUTLINE

...UN-EXPECTED DEVELOP-MENTS OCCUR...

BUT SOME-TIMES...

NO, REALLY, WHY THE ANASTRO-PHE?

...I SURELY CANNOT.

AND? WHAT DID YOU MEAN ABOUT ME ONLY BEING INTERESTED IN MYSELF?

TURN A DEAF EAR TO THAT...

I JUST WASN'T EXPECT-ING YOU TO COM-PLIMENT ME.

oh...

I'VE LISTENED TO ALL THREE RECORD-INGS.

YOUR SHOW— *WAVE, LISTEN TO ME!*, WAS IT?

INCON-CEIVABLE!

IT'S A NEAT SHOW.

BUT...

I REALLY DO THINK IT WAS ENTER-TAINING.

...WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?

...BUT YOUR OWN.

...IT WASN'T BECAUSE OF THE CHARM OF RADIO...

THERE WERE SO MANY BLANK SPOTS, IT LOOKED LIKE A SKELETON MATH PROBLEM. I THOUGHT YOU WERE GUTSY TO TRY AND FILL ALL THAT WITH ADLIB ON THE AIR.

I WAS BLOWN AWAY WHEN I SAW THE SCRIPT FOR THE RADIO DRAMA.

...YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE I HAD A CHOICE IN THE MATTER.

?

I MEAN YOU'RE A PRETTY *CHARMING* PERSON, KODA-SAN.

can't help but feel like you're dissing me.

DID NOT SEE THAT SHADY-ASS RESPONSE COMING!

WELL, IN MY CASE...

...I'D PROBABLY MAKE THE WRITER REVISE THE WHOLE SCRIPT BY THREATENING NOT TO GO DRINKING WITH HIM AGAIN.

I BET YOU'D DO A WAY BETTER JOB IF YOU WERE IN MY SHOES, CHISHIRO-SAN.

WELL, REALLY, MY SITUATION IS LIKE BEING DRIVEN TO THE EDGE OF A CLIFF AND CHOOSING TO EITHER THROW MYSELF OFF OR BE GUNNED DOWN.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "ACTUALLY INTEREST-ED"?

weird phrasing...

ACTU-ALLY, FIRST I SHOULD ASK,

ARE YOU ACTUALLY INTERESTED IN YOUR LISTENERS?

SO, NOW THAT IT'S ALL'S SAID AND DONE...

...HOW DO YOU FEEL, HAVING FINISHED YOUR FIRST BROADCAST AS A RADIO PERSONALITY?

THE LISTENERS ARE TUNING IN FOR THE COMEDIAN'S SENSE OF HUMOR.

WHEN ASKED WHO'S THE STAR OF SHOWS LIKE THAT, THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUSLY "THE COMEDIAN."

YOU KNOW HOW THERE ARE RADIO SHOWS HOSTED BY COMEDIANS, RIGHT?

HEAP
EAP

BUT IN MY CASE...

...SHOWS LED BY A RADIO PERSON-ALITY...

All gone...

THEN THERE'S INTELLECTUALS. FOR EXAMPLE, SHOWS WHERE A CRITIC DISCUSSES MOVIES.

THE CRITIC IS THE STAR. ALL THAT MATTERS IS THAT THEIR DISCUSSION IS INTEREST-ING.

THE LISTENERS ARE TUNING IN FOR THE COMEDIAN'S SENSE OF HUMOR.

FOR SEG-MENTS WITH SUBMIS-SIONS, THE OVERALL QUALITY IS DECID-ED BY THE QUALITY OF THE THEME, RIGHT?

EVEN WITHOUT ANY PARTICIPATION FROM THE AUDIENCE, THE SHOW CAN STAND ON ITS OWN.

...THE LISTEN-ERS ARE THE STAR.

THAT'S HOW I FEEL, ANYWAY.

MY JOB IS TO SCOOP UP THEIR VOICES.

♫ POP

IT'S GONNA BE A LONG NIGHT...

♫ CHUG

RADIO REIGNS SUPREME IN THAT SENSE.

SCANDALS THAT CAN'T BE DISCUSSED ON TV, RISQUÉ JOKES THAT BARELY MEET BROADCAST CODE...

FOR SHOWS HOSTED BY COMEDIANS AND INTELLECTUALS, PEOPLE EXPECT THE CORE OF THE SHOW TO BE THE INFORMATION THEY'RE GETTING.

IN REALITY, THE CORE OF WHAT'S DISCUSSED HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH MOST PEOPLE'S EVERY-DAY LIVES.

BUT THE WORLD...

...ISN'T FULL OF PEOPLE WHO LIKE LISTENING TO THAT KIND OF STUFF.

THOSE ARE THE KINDS OF TOPICS MY LISTENERS LIKE TO SHARE. THEY'RE ALL FRIVOLOUS, WITHOUT A SHRED OF NEWS RELE-VANCE...

THOUGHTS ON PEOPLE WHO TAKE YAKITORI OFF THE SKEWER BE-FORE EATING...

A SUR-PRISE FROM A BOYFRIEND THAT WAS A TOTAL TURN-OFF,

AFTER ALL, I'M A FRIVOLOUS HUMAN BEING, TOO.

...BUT I SCOOP THEM UP BECAUSE I THINK THEY'RE INTEREST-ING.

CAN SOMEONE LIKE YOU, A WALKING BROADCAST INCIDENT, UNDERSTAND HOW THOSE FRIVOLOUS PEOPLE FEEL?

IT'S NOT A SUBSTANTIAL SORT OF ENTERTAINING.

IN YOUR CASE, KODA-SAN...

...YOUR SHOW IS ENTERTAINING IN ITS OWN RIGHT, BUT... HOW DO I PUT IT?

AM I REMI HIRANO* OR SOMETHING?

*A CHEF AND TV PERSONALITY WITH A PENCHANT FOR FLUBS ON AIR.

ゴキュゴキュゴキュ
GLUG GLUG GLUG
DO YOU HAVE THAT SORT OF SUBSTANCE TO CONNECT WITH YOUR AUDIENCE?
THE SAME GOES FOR MY LISTENERS. THEY'RE STRUGGLING TO GET BY EVERY DAY.
POP
AND THAT'S WHY THEY TRY TO CHEER UP ALL THE OTHER PEOPLE LIKE THEM.
Y'KNOW HOW PEOPLE SAY THINGS LIKE, "I WOULD'VE KILLED MYSELF LONG AGO IF IT WEREN'T FOR DOWNTOWN."
THE CRASS JOKES THOSE KINDS OF PEOPLE TELL HAVE A SORT OF DARK REALISM TO THEM, RIGHT?
I MEAN, A COMEDIAN...
YOU'RE STILL NOT DONE?
...ISN'T SOMETHING YOU JUST BECOME ON A WHIM.
PEOPLE WHO BECOME COMEDIANS DO SO BECAUSE THEY CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT COMEDY.
THAT'S RIGHT.
YOUR DEFINITION OF "OKAY" IS ABOUT AS BLOATED AS YOUR BLOOD ALCOHOL LEVEL!
IS THIS HAG INVINCIBLE, OR WHAT?!
BUT IT'S OKAY. I'LL PROBABLY FORGET ABOUT IT ALL TOMORROW.
I'VE LET THE BOOZE TAKE THE WHEEL AND SWITCHED TO FULL LECTURE MODE!
WHOA, HANG ON A SECOND!
AREN'T YOU JUST USING YOUR DRUNKENNESS TO LECTURE ME?
WAS THAT SHOW REALLY ENOUGH FOR YOU TO MAKE ANY SORT OF ASSESSMENT OF MY CHARACTER?

I THINK THE ONLY TOPICS YOU COULD PRE-TEND TO BE INTERESTED IN ARE LIKE...

I DUNNO ABOUT THAT.

*Girl trying to hint, "Is it that fun drinking alone?"

NO! WELL...

YEAH, I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT...

"FOURTH-TIME DIVORCEE." "PARENTS JOINED A CULT." "BACK FROM PRISON." "ORIX BUFFALOES* FAN." "I GOT A SEX CHANGE LAST YEAR."

SOUND ABOUT RIGHT?

IF IT'S FOR WORK, ANYWAY!

I MEAN, REGARDLESS IF I'M ACTUALLY INTERESTED IN MY LISTENERS OR NOT, I CAN AT LEAST *PRETEND* I AM.

*OSAKA BASEBALL TEAM

IF YOU WERE A COMEDIAN OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT, I WOULDN'T HAVE ANY PROBLEM.

THE FACT IS,

DID YOU REALLY THINK YOU'D GET BY WITHOUT ANYONE CHEWING YOU OUT?

...AND *THIS* IS WHAT YOU HAVE TO SHOW FOR IT?

HOSTING YOUR OWN SHOW ON THE COMPA-NY'S DIME, ALBEIT LATE NIGHT...

BUT YOU BEING AN AMATEUR OFF THE STREET,

...AND YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE I USED MY CONNECTIONS TO GET THAT SLOT AND AM USING IT FOR MY OWN SELF-GRATIFICATION OR SOMETHING...

I'VE BEEN LISTENING TO YOU RANT...

...LIKE I GIVE A DAMN!

ALSO, YOU'RE SPOUTING SOME REAL BULLSHIT, LIKE I'M NOT INTERESTED IN OTHER PEOPLE BECAUSE I'M SOME UNFEELING JESTER, BUT YOU COULDN'T BE MORE OFF BASE!

...BUT I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW EVERYTHING UP UNTIL NOW HAS ALL BEEN MATO-SAN'S IDEA!

...WHICH EVEN I THINK IS KIND OF EMBARRASSING TO ADMIT.

...BUT I'M SURE AS HELL NOT!

I'VE GOT MY HANDS FULL AS IT IS, DAMN IT!

I'M SURE YOU MUST BE LIVING EASY AS A POPULAR DJ...

NEED-LESS TO SAY, ALSO MY FAULT.

AND I HAVE TO PAY TO HAVE A TOTAL STRANG-ER'S ENTIRE APARTMENT CLEANED!

THAT'S ON ME, THOUGH.

I COULD LOSE MY PART-TIME JOB ANY DAY NOW!

*MEANT TO DENY, BUT ENDED UP AFFIRMING.

HOW DO YOU EXPECT ME TO GIVE A RAT'S ASS ABOUT PEOPLE I DON'T EVEN KNOW?!

I APOLO-GIZE FOR ALL THE TROUBLE MY CARELESS-NESS HAS CAUSED.

I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO SEND SOMEONE MORE QUALI-FIED TO HELP, BUT UNFOR-TUNATELY, I COULDN'T AFFORD TO FINANCIALLY.

TOHRU-SAN, WAS IT?

YOU'RE TACHI-BANA-SAN'S BROTHER!

NICE TO MEET YOU. STRANGE WE'RE JUST MEETING NOW, THOUGH.

COME, MAKIE. YOU'RE NO LONGER NEEDED HERE.

...NO.

HOWEVER, AFTER DIS-CUSSING IT WITH TAKARADA-SAMA, WE WERE ABLE TO WORK SOMETHING OUT.

I'M *NOT* GOING.

THAT'S A LITTLE TOO SUDDEN.

HANG ON A SEC-OND.

IT SOUNDS LIKE TAKARADA-SAN IS DEAD-SET ON COMING BACK TO WORK...

...BUT HE'S STILL ONLY GOING TO HAVE ONE ARM TO WORK WITH FOR A WHILE.

I TALKED TO THE OWNER OF THE SRI LANKAN IMPORT STORE.

HE FEELS SORT OF RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENED.

NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT WORKERS, NAKAHARA-KUN.

?

I PLANNED TO BRING UP THE PROSPECT OF KEEPING HER ON AS A PART-TIMER WITH TAKARADA-SAN EVEN AFTER HE RETURNED.

PLUS, YOUR SISTER IS AN EXCELLENT WORKER.

WHAT HAPPENED TO KUNIO YANAGAWA?! WASN'T HE IN THE SAME HOSPITAL AS YOU?

GET A CLUE, OLD MAN!

THAT REMINDS ME, TAKARADA-SAN...

You monster...

SO, HE OFFERED TO SEND OVER TWO HELPERS.

IT'S GOOD TO HAVE A STORE THAT CAN'T SAY NO TO A LOYAL CUSTOMER.

HUH...? DON'T TELL ME HE...

IT'S A SHAME WHAT HAPPENED, REALLY...

YANAGAWA-KUN...

I'M MORE SURPRISED THAT HE HAD A DRUG ROUTE SET UP THAN THE FACT THAT HE STOLE IT...

THE HOKKAIDO PREFECTURAL POLICE TOOK HIM AWAY.

HE GOT CAUGHT STEALING A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF MORPHINE FROM THE HOSPITAL PHARMACY AND LEAKING IT THROUGH A DEALER DRESSED UP AS A VISITOR.

Take the store's name, for one.

YOU SURE LOVE YUMING*, BOSS...

AHH, COR-RUPTION TRULY IS SIMI-LAR...

...TO THE LIGHT OF A RAIN-BOW.

I wonder who'll get carried off by the police next.

UH... YEAH.

HE WAS SUCH A PURE-HEARTED BOY, TOO. HE NEVER COMPLAINED WHEN I FELT HIS BUM. HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN...?

*YUMI MATSUTOYA, A PROLIFIC JAPANESE SINGER.

AS I UNDER-STOOD IT, YOU WERE LIVING AT VOYAGER WHILE HELPING OUT AROUND THE SHOP.

MAKIE.

...WERE YOU GOING JUST NOW?

BUT WHERE...

That's a hell of a line

IS THIS BANGKOK RIGHT AFTER THE COUP OR WHAT?

FRIENDS?

EVEN IF THAT WERE THE CASE, I DON'T RECALL GIVING YOU PERMISSION TO GO OUT AT NIGHT.

YOU?

...

A FRIEND'S HOUSE.

YOUR SISTER WAS GOING TO STAY AT MY PLACE TONIGHT.

TACHI-BANA-SAN.

UM... COME AGAIN?

THE THOUGHT IS APPRE-CIATED, BUT...

...HOW-EVER, I DO NOT WISH TO SPOIL HER.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND-NESS...

NAKA-HARA-SAN...

WE CERTAINLY COULDN'T JUST HAVE HER STAY AT THE STORE. WE'RE NOT EVEN PAYING HER, AND WE'D BE HELD LIABLE IF ANY-THING HAPPENED. KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

WELL, I MEAN...

...SHE'S BEEN STAYING WITH ME THIS WHOLE TIME, ANYWAY.

Tachi-bana-san? Are you listening?

Actually, she's been a big help, looking after the kid and...

My sister and her kid live with me, so it's been the four of us.

Oh, but it's not just us two.

I know how that is.

It's late, but I'm hungry...

CLUNK CLONK

Cheers
09-30-2015 12:52

I'll be home late tonight.
Madoka Chishiro asked me to meet her in Maruyama Park...
I'll get her before she gets me!
Don't wait up.

Hey! Don't ignore us!

wave
LISTEN
TO ME!

Chapter 26 "I CAN'T GO BACK THERE."

YOU'RE FROM KUSHIRO, RIGHT? THAT TOWN WITH NOTHING TO SEE BUT THE NUSAMAI BRIDGE AND NONSTOP SUB-ZERO WINDS...

IF YOUR LIVING SITUATION'S THAT ROUGH, THEN WHY DON'T YOU JUST MOVE BACK TO THE BOONIES?

MADOKA CHISHIRO'S LECTURE CONTINUES!

YOUR PREACHING'S GETTING MORE RANDOM THE DRUNKER YOU'RE GETTING.

ALSO, WHERE DOES A CHICK WHOSE FLAT CHEST IS THE SPITTING IMAGE OF THE *AUTUMN* NUDE STATUE ON SAID BRIDGE GET OFF DISSING MY HOMETOWN?!

WHAT THE HELL KINDA TANGENT IS THAT?!

I WAS BORN AND RAISED IN SAPPORO,

BUT THERE WAS THIS GUY I WAS DATING WHEN I WENT TO HOKKAIDO U.

BROWN BEAR RE-SEARCH CLUB?!

HE WAS ONE YEAR MY SENIOR IN THE BROWN BEAR RESEARCH CLUB WE BE-LONGED TO.

HE WAS SUPER SERIOUS AND NEVER JOKED AROUND, BUT I LIKED THAT ABOUT HIM.

WHO'D HE LOOK LIKE?

HM? KAKU-RYU*.

FOR REAL?! AWE-SOME!

*KAKURYU RIKISABURO, A MONGOLIAN SUMO WRESTLER.

I forgot my camera. Text me the photos later!

HOWEVER, THERE ALSO HAPPENED TO BE A GIRL JUST LIKE YOU IN THAT CLUB!

I KNOW YOU'RE DRUNK AND ALL, BUT YOU'RE WITH THE MEDIA! TRY TO BE A LITTLE MORE POLITICALLY CORRECT!

LADY, PLEASE!

WHERE THE ONLY THING TO EAT IS SPAGHETTI KATSU*.

WELL, I GUESS IT MAKES SENSE. SHE WAS IN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND ALSO FROM KUSHIRO.

A GIRL WITH NO PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE, ONLY LIVING IN THE MOMENT!

*A LOCAL DISH OF KUSHIRO CONSISTING OF A FRIED CUTLET SERVED OVER SPAGHETTI.

MUCH I CAN'T LET SLIDE, THERE IS.

YOU'RE BOTH DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY TALKING SHIT ABOUT ME, HUH?

A REAL PIECE OF HUMAN GARBAGE WHO TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THAT TO GET AHEAD.

...AND WAS A HIT WITH ALL THE GUYS.

SHE WAS BLESSED WITH THE SAME VUL-GAR WIT THAT YOU HAVE...

SHE'LL FALL INTO A HOLE SHE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO CLIMB BACK OUT OF SOMEDAY, UNLESS SOMEONE GUIDES HER.

BUT NOT THAT GIRL.

I NEVER THOUGHT EVEN *HE'D* FALL FOR HER WILES, THOUGH.

RUSTLE

THUD ドスッ

THUD ドスッ

MADOKA-CHAN.

YOU'RE A WOMAN WHO'S PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF MAKING IT ON HER OWN IN THE WORLD.

UHH, YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?

ISN'T THAT KIND OF ARROGANT OF YOU?

...IS JUST A BIG, FUN PARTY VENUE TO HER.

I'M PRETTY SURE SHE'S CAPABLE OF LIVING JUST ABOUT ANYWHERE.

MAYBE THE PLACE YOU ASSUME SHE'LL "FALL" TO...

DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S WAY MORE LIKELY?

...ARE OFTEN THE FIRST ONES TO BREAK WHEN THEY REALIZE THAT'S NOT ALWAYS THE CASE.

ACTUALLY, PEOPLE WHO LIVE UPRIGHT AND HONEST, THINKING THEY'LL GET FARTHER AHEAD THAN THE PEOPLE GOOFING OFF...

Uhh. Next up, we have one from Miyoshi Combo-san, a 19-year-old college student.

OH, THEY READ IT...

SO, I SENT IN A WALL OF TEXT TO THE RADIO BITCHING ABOUT IT.

YET, I COULDN'T SAY ANY OF THAT TO HIS FACE...

...AND I WAS TOO PROUD TO TALK TO MY FRIENDS ABOUT IT.

...means that you're both around the same academic level, even though you might be in different departments.

Also, you make it sound like she's just mindlessly goofing around...

...but is that really what's going on?

You seem to be looking down on her, but when you think about it, the fact that you both go to the same college...

Hmm... Well, it might be hard to understand at 19...

...but that's just how things are, to be honest.

Frankly, the fact that you're both in college is pretty admirable from my perspective.

Even so, I lived from meager paycheck to paycheck, and now I'm working as a radio DJ.

I dropped out of high school, y'know. I only have a middle-school diploma!

FM 85.2mHz

...you have to wonder who really has their eyes on the future.

She could be trying to make as many connections as possible.

In that sense, between her and someone who does nothing but study...

Thinking back on it, I only really have memories of goofing around with my friends.

I can't count how many people I know who'd help me out when I'm in a bind. Goofing around means building and expanding those sorts of relationships.

...GO TO HELL.

TO ALL THE PAINFULLY EARNEST PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOTHING AMUSING TO SAY...

...BUT LISTENING TO THAT BROADCAST IS WHAT MADE ME DECIDE TO BECOME A RADIO PERSONALITY.

WELL, CAN'T EXPECT A HIGH-SCHOOL DROPOUT DJ TO HAVE ANY-THING OF VALUE TO SAY...

I WANT TO KEEP TELLING THEM, "IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT."

...I WANT TO SAY, "YOU'RE NOT ALONE."

TO ALL THE UPRIGHT, AWK-WARD FOLKS WHO ALWAYS HAVE THE SPOT-LIGHT STOLEN FROM THEM BY MORE FLEXIBLE PEOPLE...

MOST PEOPLE END UP PAYING THE PRICE SOME-DAY FOR THAT DEVIL-MAY-CARE ATTITUDE.

THAT JUST MEANS THAT PARTICULAR DJ HAD RIDICULOUS LUCK!

WHOA, THERE, SENPAI.

Didn't think you'd make me the face of flexible women.

I ENTERED THIS INDUSTRY TO GET REVENGE ON PEOPLE LIKE *YOU!*

THAT'S RIGHT!

SMOKE

HEY! ARE YOU LISTENING, CHISHIRO-SAN?!

I MEAN, JUST LOOK AT ME!

...WELL, I DID GET SWOOPED UP BY MATO-SAN WHEN I WAS ON THE VERGE OF GETTING FIRED, BUT STILL!

...AND I DID HAVE AN ADORABLE AD LET ME MOVE IN WITH HER WHEN I HAD TO VACATE MY APARTMENT.

HUH...? WAIT A MINUTE. MAYBE I HAVE BEEN KINDA...

NO WAY... WHERE DO I CHANNEL THIS FURY NOW...?

WOULD YOU LIKE A RE-CEIPT?

NO, THAT'S ALL RIGHT.

MINARE-SAN!

HUH?

...OH!

MY ADOR-ABLE AD?!

I DIDN'T SNUFF HER!

GOING TO NEED A SHOVEL, BY ANY CHANCE?

CAN YOU HELP ME MOVE THIS LADY TO MY CAR?

UMM. ARE WE...

I'VE NEVER BEEN HAPPIER TO SEE YOU!

WAHHH! HONEY!

WHAT HAP-PENED?

I NEVER KNEW DEALING WITH DRUNK WOMEN WAS THIS BIG OF A PAIN IN THE ASS.

YOU'RE TELLING ME. I'VE GOTTA BE CAREFUL FROM NOW ON.

I SEE... SOUNDS ROUGH.

...MADOKA-SAN IS PRETTY LUCKY, TOO.

BUT YOU KNOW...

I GUESS MY SHOW MIGHT'VE BEEN TOO DEEP FOR THE SIMPLE MASSES TO COMPRE-HEND, THEN.

'ZAT RIGHT?

I THOUGHT IT WAS GOOD.

YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW THIS, MINARE-SAN...

...IN NEARLY HALF OF THE SHOWS AIRED ON MRS IN THE NINETIES, IN-CLUDING *ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS* AND *PICCADILLY CIRCUS.*

...BUT KUREKO-SAN IS AN EXCEP-TIONAL WRIT-ER WHO HAD A HAND...

...A SCRIPT-WRITER FOR HER SHOW, *SEPTEMBER BLUE MOON.*

KUREKO-SAN IS INSIDE THE BOOTH WITH MADOKA-SAN...

RUMOR HAS IT MADOKA-SAN BULLIED THE HIGHER-UPS TO MAKE IT THAT WAY.

...BUT EXCEPT FOR A FEW SPECIALS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, HE'S BEEN WORKING ALMOST ENTIRELY AS MADOKA-SAN'S PERSONAL WRITER.

PARTLY BECAUSE HE'S BEEN BUSY WITH HIS MAIN JOB AS A NOVELIST, MAYBE...

BUT IN RECENT YEARS,

MAYBE THEY'RE JUST EACH OTHER'S FAVORITE.

BEATS ME.

HUH.

I WONDER WHY, THOUGH.

...BUT HE'S STUCK DOING THIS.

KUREKO-SAN IS CAPABLE OF DOING SO MUCH MORE...

...THAT TALENT HAS TO DRY UP EVENTUALLY.

THAT, OR THEY CAN'T KEEP UP WITH THE TIMES.

...NO MATTER HOW TALENTED A WRITER IS...

...BUT AS MUCH AS WE'D LIKE TO HAVE A DIRECTOR, AD, MIXER, AND WRITER FOR EVERY SHOW...

...THOSE DAYS ARE GONE.

AS AN AD, YOU SHOULD ALREADY KNOW THIS...

NANBA-SAN.

WHEN ASKED WHETHER OR NOT I REALLY NEED A SCRIPT-WRITER FOR MY SHOW NOW, TO BE HONEST, I'D PROBABLY BE FINE WITHOUT ONE.

BUT NOW...

AND I'VE HAD GUESTS CANCEL AT THE LAST MINUTE DUE TO UNFORE-SEEN TROUBLE AND HAD TO FILL 90 MINUTES WITH AN IMPROMPTU SEGMENT .

...I CAN PREPARE A WHOLE SCRIPT BY MYSELF IF I'M IN THE RIGHT MOOD.

WHEN I WAS JUST STARTING OUT AS A RADIO PER-SONALITY...

...I WOULD GET TOO NERVOUS TO SPEAK IF I DIDN'T HAVE A SCRIPT BY KUREKO-SAN.

IT'S NOT HIS MAIN JOB OR MY EGO THAT'S TAKING WORK AWAY FROM KUREKO-SAN.

BEFORE LONG, RADIO STATIONS WON'T HAVE *WRITERS* ANYMORE.

IT'S THE STATION'S DECISION.

EVEN SO...

...I KEEP TELLING THE PRODUCER THAT I ***ABSOLUTELY NEED*** KUREKO-SAN.

IF I DON'T, THEN HE WON'T HAVE A PLACE AT MRS ANYMORE.

DON QUIJOTE
CAJA DE AHORROS

OH, SURE...

BY THE WAY, CAN YOU DROP ME OFF NEAR NAKAMURA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL?

...YOU REALLY WERE GOING TO BURY ME, WEREN'T YOU?

A SHOVEL...

AND WHAT'S IN THIS DON QUIJOTE BAG?

MOUNT ICHAN-KOPPE.

WHERE WERE YOU HEADED, ANYWAY?

I'M FINE, NO BIGGIE. I JUST GOT STRUNG UP A LITTLE.

UMM... HOW'S YOUR NECK?

I'M SO SORRY, NAKA-HARA-SAN!

GWOHHH!

WHAT HAVE I DONE...?

G-GOOD LORD.

ARE YOU OKAY, NAKA-HARA-KUN?

GASP.

STOP IT, TOHRU! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

...I TEND TO BLACK OUT TEMPO-RARILY.

EVER SINCE WE WERE YOUNG, WHEN-EVER I GET ANGRY OVER SOMETHING REGARDING MY SISTER...

IT'S COOL! I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE CLEAR.

was that the power of darkness just now?

A THOUSAND PARDONS!

MY SISTER HAS BEEN IMPOSING ON YOU, AND YET I...

UHH... I WAS AT FAULT JUST NOW, BUT YOU REALLY OUGHT TO SEE A DOCTOR ABOUT THAT.

For-give me!

Help!

ONE TIME IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, I WENT TO COMPLAIN AT THE HOME OF A CLASS-MATE WHO'D BEEN BULLYING MY SISTER, BUT WHILE TALKING AT THE DOOR, I LOST CONSCIOUS-NESS...

AFTER THE FACT, I LEARNED THAT IT WAS LAKE NIIKAPPU, NO LESS THAN 100 KM FROM THEIR HOME.

...AND WHEN I CAME TO, SAID CLASSMATE AND HIS MOTHER WERE BOUND TOGETHER IN A BAMBOO MAT AND DROWNING IN A WATERING HOLE I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE.

HEY. GOT A MIN-UTE?

NAH, I'M STILL AT THE RESTAU-RANT.

WHO ARE YOU CALLING?

UGH... I'M SORRY.

I SWEAR, TOHRU! WE'VE ALREADY CAUSED SO MUCH TROUBLE FOR THIS PLACE!

AND I GUESS HE WANTS TO SPEAK TO YOU, SO I'M GONNA GIVE HIM THE PHONE.

HM? YEAH, YEAH.

SO, TACHI-BANA-SAN'S BROTHER'S HERE NOW.

UMM.

Ah ha ha ha! Self-ishness? Don't be silly.

I APOLOGIZE FOR MY SISTER'S SELFISH-NESS...

Hello. Pleased to meet you. I'm Chuuya's sister, Meiko.

...HELLO?

...

I'M SURE MAKIE-SAN WILL MAKE A FINE WIFE SOMEDAY.

SHE'S SUCH A MODEST GIRL, NOTH-ING LIKE MY BONEHEAD LITTLE BROTHER.

YOUR SISTER HAS ACTUALLY BEEN A BIG HELP, LOOK-ING AFTER MY KID.

I'VE BEEN FREELOADING AT MY LITTLE BROTHER'S APARTMENT EVER SINCE I LEFT MY HUBBY.

Really, you don't have to worry about a thing. *Ha ha ha.*

Oh, speaking of your sister...

I SEE. I'M RELIEVED TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT...

...BUT I'M SURE HER STAYING THERE MUST BE A BURDEN IN SOME WAY, SO I THINK IT WOULD BE BEST IF—

IS THAT SO? UMM...

I SHOULD GIVE THE PHONE BACK TO YOUR BROTHER NOW...

UH-HUH...

I COULD SEE HER BROTHER'S MIASMA GRADUALLY DISSIPATE.

YOU REALLY SAVED OUR ASSES.

MORAL OF THE STORY, DON'T UNDERESTIMATE A BORED HOUSEWIFE'S GOSSIP STOCK.

BUT... I DO AGREE WITH MY BROTHER.

I DO FEEL THAT I NEED TO LEAVE HERE AS SOON AS I CAN.

BUT...

...I'D LIKE TO KEEP WORKING AT VOY-AGER, IF POSSI-BLE.

I WANT TO WORK IN THE SAME KITCHEN AS NAKA-HARA-SAN.

THANK YOU FOR COVERING FOR ME EARLIER.

IT, UMM...

MADE ME REALLY HAPPY.

HUH? NO PROB.

WE'RE WORK BUDDIES, AFTER ALL.

I WONDER IF HE REALIZES HE'S THE SKETCHIEST KIND OF GUY THERE IS.

BUT IF YOU MOVE OUT OF HERE...

...WILL YOU GO BACK HOME?

I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK TO MY BROTHER'S HOUSE.

...AND LIVE A DRAB, WORRILESS LIFE AS A FULL-TIME HOUSEWIFE.

HE SERIOUSLY THINKS THAT WOULD MAKE ME HAPPIEST.

HE'D RATHER I STAY SHEL-TERED FROM THE WORLD...

...FIND MYSELF A BANKER OR CIVIL SERVANT...

...GO TO A MARRIAGE HUNTING PARTY...

RECENT-LY...

...MEIKO-SAN ASKED WHAT EXACTLY MY BROTHER WANTS TO DO WITH ME.

I guess that's one modern indulgence.

IT MADE ME REALIZE JUST HOW HOPELESS OF A SITUATION I'M IN.

WHEN I HEARD THE WORD "MAR-RIAGE" COME OUT OF MY BROTHER'S MOUTH,

I'M SURPRISED HE'S OKAY WITH YOU GOING TO MARRIAGE HUNTING PARTIES.

WELL, YOU'D DEFINITELY BE POPULAR AT THOSE KINDS OF SHIN-DIGS.

...AND TELL HIM WHAT I WANTED TO BE OR WHAT KIND OF LIFE I WANTED. I WAS TOO AFRAID.

...I'VE NEVER ONCE TRIED TO ASSERT MYSELF TO MY BROTHER...

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT...

HE'D JUST SEE IT AS ME FIND-ING AN EXCUSE TO RUN AWAY.

HE PROB-ABLY WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME, EVEN IF I WAS SERIOUS.

BUT...

WHY DON'T YOU TELL HIM YOU WANT TO BE THE WIFE OF A CURRY SHOP OWNER?

BUT IT WAS ONLY REALLY BY CHANCE THAT I STARTED WORKING AT VOYAGER.

WIFE?

SO, IN OTHER WORDS,

WELL...I GUESS I CAN SEE WHY HE'D GET A LITTLE OVERPRO-TECTIVE IN THAT CASE.

YOUR BROTHER THINKS YOU DON'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO DECIDE YOUR OWN FUTURE.

I'M SLOWLY BUILDING UP TO MAKING IT HAPPEN.

AND REALLY...

...THERE'S ACTUALLY SOMETHING ELSE I WANT TO TRY DOING RIGHT NOW.

IT FEELS LIKE FATE, IN A WAY.

IF I HADN'T STARTED WORKING AT VOYAGER.

...IT'S SOMETHING I MIGHT NEVER HAVE THOUGHT TO TRY...

WHAT KIND OF TWISTED-ASS PERSON THROWS BACK BOTTLE AFTER BOTTLE IN FRONT OF SOMEONE WHO CAN'T DRINK?!

AHH, THAT HITS THE SPOT!

PAHHH!

keep it down!

ダン!
BAM!

I'M GONNA MAKE HER LICK MY BOOTS...

AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT I'LL BELIEVE TO CHEER MYSELF UP.

...IS BECAUSE SHE SEES ME AS A POTENTIAL RIVAL, RIGHT?

MINARE-SAN...

HM?

I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.

AND WITH YOU, MINARE KODA, AS MY MAIN DJ,

AND KATSUMI KUREKO ONBOARD AS A SCRIPTWRITER, IN THE STRONGEST LINEUP I CAN IMAGINE...

I'M GOING TO DO EVERY-THING I CAN TO BECOME A CHIEF DIRECTOR WITHIN THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

...IT'LL BECOME A SHOW OF LEGEND! THAT'S THE ONLY FUTURE I ENVISION!

...I'LL CONVINCE THE PRODUCER TO LET ME MAN-AGE AN ENTIRE THREE-HOUR BLOCK!

BETWEEN THE THREE OF US...

NO, THANKS!

ANY WRITER BUT HIM! SERIOUSLY!

WHAAT?!

GRAB

MIZU-HO!

MINARE-SAN!

Chapter 27 "THINGS WON'T PLAY OUT."

HOW'D LAST NIGHT GO?

WHERE DO I BEGIN?!

DIDN'T YOU?

MATO-SAN, I BET YOU THINK I CAME HERE TODAY TO HAVE A MEETING ABOUT THE NEXT BROADCAST, HUH?

AND HERE I THOUGHT YOU BROUGHT THOSE FOR THE STAFF...

AND I'M NOT LEAVING UNTIL ALL THESE BEERS ARE EMPTY.

SAPPORO

I HAVE, IN FACT, COME TO BITCH ABOUT LAST NIGHT!

ON THE CON-TRARY!

AFTER HAVING NOT ONLY ME, BUT MY ENTIRE HOMETOWN OF KUSHIRO BADMOUTHED...

...BUT HUMILIATION IS AN INVALUABLE EMOTION.

SHE'S SERIOUSLY DRINKING...

MATO-SAN, IT MIGHT BE ODD FOR AN UNDERLING WITH NO TRACK RECORD LIKE ME TO SAY THIS...

...FOR THE FIRST TIME, I WAS FILLED WITH THE DRIVE TO MAKE THAT LATE-NIGHT SLOT SO POPULAR THAT CHISHIRO-SAN WILL DIE A BITTER, REGRETFUL DEATH.

MIZUHO-CHAN ALSO SAID SHE WANTS TO BECOME A DIRECTOR AND MAKE A SHOW SO AWESOME THAT CHISHIRO-SAN WILL GO THROUGH MENOPAUSE FROM THE SHOCK.

IN THE END, I'D SAY IT WAS A WORTHWHILE EVENING.

WHOSE MENOPAUSE IS WORTHWHILE, YOU SAY?

OH? GLAD TO HEAR IT. OR SO I'D LIKE TO SAY.

WE WERE TALKING ABOUT LAST NIGHT.

MINARE WAS SAYING HOW WORTH-WHILE IT WAS TALKING TO YOU.

I THINK THE NUANCE IS A LITTLE OFF...

MATO-SAN.

OH, SORRY. DON'T LET ME GET IN THE WAY OF YOUR MEETING.

A FEW WORDS I DO REMEM-BER...

TO BE HONEST, I OVERDID IT AND DON'T REMEMBER MUCH OF LAST NIGHT.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF A SHOW PLAN YET?

YOU TOTAL-LY DO REMEM-BER!

JUST THINK OF ME AS ONE OF THE BRONZE STATUES OF NUSAMAI BRIDGE.

*SHE'S ACTUALLY THE **WORST**...*

...ARE HAG, FLAT-CHESTED, AND...

I *KNEW* THE BAR WAS RAISED A LITTLE HIGH FOR ME AS A HOST!

FROM WHAT MIZUHO TELLS ME, IT'S TYPICAL FOR THE DIRECTOR OR WRITER TO THINK UP SHOW PLANS.

...WHY ARE YOU PUTTING THE SQUEEZE ON ME LIKE A HOMEROOM TEACHER AFTER SUMMER BREAK?

YOU HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO DO SO.

FOR REAL?! ALL RIGHT!

GUESS YOU DON'T WEAR THAT FLASHY SUIT FOR NOTHING!

WELL, I DO HAVE ABOUT TEN OR SO IDEAS STOCKED UP.

SILENCE, STATUE!

THAT'S NOT ALWAYS THE CASE.

Wave, Listen to me! segment proposal #

- sincerely answer 20 relationship questions wh
  enough to see a wild brown bear.
- scenario in which after having an arg
  ts, listeners vote to decide who
  get accosted by a mugger and
  can, knocking them out cold. wh

"SINCERELY ANSWER 20 RELATIONSHIP QUESTIONS WHILE CLOSE ENOUGH TO SEE A WILD BROWN BEAR..."

NOTHING! WHO CARES IF THEY FIND OUT?!

WE COULD DO IT WITH SOUND EFFECTS IN THE STUDIO, BUT WHAT'LL WE DO IF THE LISTENERS FIND OUT THERE'S NO ACTUAL TENSION?

DO WE REALLY NEED THIS LOCATION IF WE'RE AUDIO ONLY?!

...DO YOU VALUE HUMAN LIFE AT ALL?

THAT KINDA STUFF'S ONLY ENTERTAINING WHEN YOU CONTRAST IT AGAINST HOW SOMEONE NORMALLY ACTS.

I FIND MYSELF FANTASIZING ABOUT WHAT SPEAKERS WILL SAY WHEN I PUSH THEM TO THEIR WIT'S END.

WHEN YOU'VE BEEN IN THE BUSINESS AS LONG AS I HAVE, YOU GET BORED WITH REGULAR OLD RADIO...

BROWN BEAR RESEARCH CLUB

It's relatively safe.

SILENCE, STATUE!

I KNOW OF A CRUISE NEAR RAUSU WHERE YOU CAN WATCH BROWN BEARS ALONG THE COAST.

TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY!

LESSON:
NO ONE WILL GIVE SERIOUS ADVICE TO A WOMAN WHO STARTS DRINKING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?

IF SOMEONE LIKE ME WHO DOESN'T EVEN HAVE AN ESTABLISHED PERSONA DOES IT...

...THEN I'LL JUST *BECOME* THAT PERSON!

I *DID* MAKE A PAGE, BUT...

OH, THAT. WELL...

OH, YEAH. MIZUHO SAID SOMETHING ABOUT YOU WANTING TO USE YOUR INTRODUCTION PAGE TO GATHER SEGMENT IDEAS FROM THE LISTENERS.

HOW'S THAT GOING? DID YOU MAKE ONE YET?

GIVE ME YOUR HONEST OPINION.

ALL RIGHT, THEN.

FOR STARTERS, THE PHOTO SUCKS.

Minare Koda

"Looking for topics you'd li

Sex	Female
D.O.B	November 4
Zodiac	Scorpio
Blood Type	O
Birthplace	Hokkaido
Profile	Also works at a soup curry restaurant in Susukino, Voyag Dreamland of Bread and Curry **Motto**: Even fish flee from wate too pristine.
Shows	Wave, Listen to Me! (Sat. 3:30 am
Affiliated Sites	Voyager: A Dreamland of Bre

IT'S LIKE ONE OF DAISUKE MIURA'S* SELFIES.

THEY SENT ME THIS FAMILY PHOTO TAKEN BACK WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL.

AFTER CROPPING EVERYONE ELSE OUT, THIS IS WHAT I GOT.

And who's that in front of you?

WHEN WAS THIS TAKEN, ANYWAY?

I THOUGHT IT'D BE A GOOD IDEA TO USE ONE I LOOK YOUNG IN, SO WHEN I ASKED MY FOLKS TO MAIL ME PHOTOS TO PICK FROM...

*A JAPANESE BASEBALL PLAYER WITH A HISTORY OF TAKING BIZARRE SELFIES ALL FROM THE SAME ANGLE.

IT'S ABOUT AS IRRITATING TO LOOK AT AS A VOCALIST'S BAND POSTER SOLICITING FOR GUITAR, BASS, AND DRUMS.

I WENT WITH SOMETHING REALLY BASIC TO MAKE SURE NO ONE FELT TOO LIMITED...

Minare Ko

"Looking for topics you'd like to hear."

Sex	Female
	November 4
	Scorpio

IS THIS SENTENCE HERE YOUR ATTEMPT AT SOLICITING IDEAS?

AH HA HA HA. JUST ONE...

...AND? GET ANY SUGGESTIONS?

I don't mind people like that.

IF *NOTHING ELSE*, THEIR EARNESTNESS CERTAINLY SHINES THROUGH.

IT'S PROBABLY FROM SOMEONE I KNOW!

SORRY... I SHOULD CONFESS SOMETHING.

BETWEEN THIS USER NAME, THIS WRITING STYLE, AND THIS CONTENT...

POST EDIT SHO

I'm rooting for you! Sender: NakaChu

Why don't you try asking your foodie listeners for ideas about secret menu ite to serve at the restaurant you work at? could also try making them at home and coming up with unique names for each dish that makes the cut.

I always tune in. Keep it up!

I LIKE BADGER TAIJI, ANYWAY.

OH, YEAH, I DID.

MINARE.

I TOLD YOU ABOUT HCB'S *THE NO BADGER-HUNTING HOUR*, DIDN'T I?

DID YOU LISTEN TO IT?

WHY NOT TRY MIMICKING THEIR STYLE?

DESPER-ATE TIMES CALL FOR DESPERATE MEASURES.

DON'TCHA THINK THAT'LL BE HARD WITH MY SHOW?

AHH... THAT, HUH?

MAYBE IT'S TIME YOU ACCEPT YOUR FATE AS A RADIO PERSONALITY— AND THAT MEANS NO LISTENERS, NO SHOW.

Good evening, everyone! It's time for *The No Badger-Hunting Hour*!

I'm your host, the minister of gout, Badger Taizo...

...joined by the prince of chronic hernias, Badger Jiro.

As we announced last week, this week will be another production by Joker Skonsky.

We actually received some fan mail for Joker, as it turns out...

That's right! Three, even! That's more than we got when we first started out.

One more, and we'll be bringing Joker into the studio. We haven't had anyone come in since Pencil Alley, right?

Yeah. It's too bad Pencil didn't talk much, though.

It'd be great if Joker turns out to be a high-school girl or something.

Has this show ever once been blessed with a miracle like that?

Well, he's a shy guy. Also, it seems he moved back home to Niigata in order to take over the family farm.

THIS JOKER SKONSKY GUY'S PRETTY GOOD, HUH?

THEY HAVE A PECULIAR WRITING STYLE. I THINK THEY'LL BRING THEM INTO THE STUDIO EVENTUALLY.

Now then, for our first reading of the night, *An Epic...*

...THEY CENTER THE WHOLE SHOW AROUND ONE SUB-MISSION.

BUT IN *THE NO BADGER-HUNTING HOUR'S* CASE...

MOST PROGRAMS ARE BUILT BY STRINGING TOGETHER SUBMIS-SIONS FROM A BUNCH OF LISTEN-ERS.

...IS A COMPLETE HOUR-LONG BROADCAST PACKAGE.

HOWEVER, THAT ONE SUBMIS-SION...

Eriko! Tonight, I'll express my feelings for you...

...AND BROADCAST IT LIKE ANY OTHER RADIO PROGRAM.

THE DIRECTOR, WRITER, AND HOSTS TAKE THOSE EMAILS, DECIDE HOW TO ADAPT THEM FOR THE SHOW...

MUSIC, LIFE COUNSELING, *OGIRI**, SKITS, YOU'RE FREE TO INCLUDE ANY SEGMENTS YOU WANT...

...AND WE'LL MAKE IT HAPPEN, HUH?

TELL US WHAT KINDA SHOW YOU GUYS WANNA LISTEN TO...

...BUT YOU HAVE TO FIGURE OUT THE CONTENT OF ALL THOSE SEGMENTS BY YOURSELF.

IN FACT...

SOMETIMES PEOPLE SEE THIS KIND OF FORMAT AS COMEDIANS JUST SLACKING OFF, BUT IT'S ACTUALLY A LOT OF WORK.

I can hear it now, the first word you said to me, that day we met at the beach in Autumn...

IF YOU GO WITH COUNSELING OR *OGIRI*, THEN YOU HAVE TO INCLUDE BOTH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

...IT'S ALSO A VENTURE FOR NURTURING NEW BROADCAST WRITERS.

The profile of your face vaguely resembling Chiba prefecture...

IT'S NOT UNHEARD OF FOR PEOPLE TO SEND IN EMAILS THAT ARE THOUSANDS OF WORDS LONG.

*OGIRI: A TYPE SEGMENT IN WHICH LISTENERS SEND IN RESPONSES TO A PREVIOUSLY GIVEN THEME. ANSWERS CAN BE BOTH COMEDIC AND PROFOUND.

Enough already! How many lines are you gonna sing?!

Let me finish. There are only 155 lines left.

HUH? YEAH.

YOU KNOW THE COMEDY DUO, O?

...AND THEY CALLED OUT TO HIM OVER THE AIR AND SUGGESTED THAT HE MOVE TO TOKYO AND WORK WITH THEM AS A WRITER.

HIS TALENT CAUGHT O'S EYE...

...THERE WAS A VERY TALENTED CONTRIBUTOR WHO WROTE IN REGULARLY.

AMONG THE LISTENERS FOR THEIR SHOW, *ALL-NIGHT JAPON*...

Is that the Greece national anthem or what?!

UH-OH.

WELL...HE ENDED UP MOVING BACK HOME DUE TO RELATIONSHIP REASONS, THOUGH.

SOME TIME LATER, THAT LISTENER DID MOVE TO TOKYO AND ENDED UP WRITING A NUMBER SCRIPTS FOR O.

...BUT IT'S MOST COMMON FOR THEM TO BE FORMER CONTRIBUTORS.

THEY SAY THERE ARE COUNTLESS DIFFERENT WAYS PEOPLE END UP BECOMING BROADCAST WRITERS OR SCRIPTWRITERS...

YOU COULD PUT IT THAT WAY.

SO, IT'S LIKE AN AUDITION FOR WRITERS?

THIS SHOW MIGHT BE TRYING TO SYSTEMATICALLY BREED THOSE KINDS OF PEOPLE.

You've changed, man. You never used to be the kind of person who judged people by the color of their skin.

Clothes! I'm talking about the color of people's clothes here!

OHH! I'D LIKE TO LISTEN TO THAT!

MATO-SAN ASKED ME IF I WANTED TO TRY THIS KINDA FORMAT FOR MY SHOW.

EPOXY RESIN

I'M NOT SURE IT FITS FOR A 20-MINUTE SEGMENT ON A LATE-NIGHT RADIO SHOW.

AT FIRST, I THOUGHT, "EUREKA!"

EVEN THOUGH THAT CUP SAKE SHREW SAID IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE WRITERS DIE OUT.

BUT THINKING ABOUT IT SOME MORE, I REALIZE IT WORKS FOR THIS SHOW BECAUSE IT'S HOSTED BY COMEDIANS WHO CAN RECRUIT WRITERS FOR THE TV BUSINESS.

EPOXY

The hell are you doing, wearing a shirt that looks like Lush soap when your face looks like a stock photo.

Next year, maybe.

I've still got 158 lines left. Think you'll make the last train?

I THINK PEOPLE WILL STILL WRITE IN EVEN WITHOUT THE HOPES OF BECOMING A WRITER OR GETTING CALLED INTO THE STUDIO.

PFF.

HEH HEH.

...MAYBE SO, BUT WOULDN'T I JUST BE A DOWNSIZED VERSION OF *THE NO BAD-GER-HUNT-ING HOUR* IN THAT CASE?

REALLY, HAVING YOUR EMAIL READ IS REWARD ENOUGH.

NAH, I THINK THAT WAS MORE THE BADGERS' SPIN THAN ANYTHING.

THAT WAS A PRETTY GOOD JOKE.

I have three canker sores in my mouth right now.

ONLY VEEERY OCCA-SIONALLY.

YEAH? EVER HAD YOURS READ?

Y'KNOW,

THIS BRINGS BACK MEMORIES OF WHEN I WROTE INTO AN *OGIRI* ON A SHOW CALLED *TRAFFIC LIGHTS & SEQUINS* IN HIGH SCHOOL.

...ISN'T LIKE THOSE HOSTED BY COMEDIANS...

...WHERE IT'S ALL STRUNG TOGETHER BY *OGIRI*.

BUT, HOW SHOULD I PUT IT...

I THINK WHAT MATO-SAN WANTS TO SEE FROM YOUR SHOW...

THEN, YOU'VE FOLLOWED THE PATH OF SCRIPTWRITERS BEFORE YOU.

BECOME MY PERSONAL WRITER!

MY SUBMISSIONS WERE ONLY RARELY USED, SO I'M JUST A DROP IN THE OCEAN OF OTHER CONTRIBUTORS.

NO...

IT'S SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. SOMETHING NEW.

NOR IS IT LIKE REGULAR DJS WHO STRING TOGETHER MUSIC WITH BITS OF TALKING.

YOU'RE SAYING SOME UNSETTLING STUFF WITH A STRAIGHT FACE ALL OF A SUDDEN!

WHOA THERE, MIZUHO!

I THINK THAT'S THE KIND OF THING HE'S LOOKING FOR.

...IT'S MORE SLAPDASH AND SPONTANEOUS. ANARCHIC, EVEN.

IT SOUNDS NICE TO JUST CALL IT ***NEW,*** BUT REALLY...

VOYAGER

WELCOME!

ONE MANGO LASSI, AND...

TALK ABOUT EASY-GOING...

HEY, BOSS. WE SHOULD HIRE MORE PEOPLE AND WORK OUT SHIFTS EVEN-TUALLY.

THIS IS GREAT. FEELS LIKE WE'RE A SQUAD WITH FIVE PEOPLE HERE. THE PLACE IS RUNNING LIKE A WELL-OILED MACHINE.

SHU 蜀

WEI 魏

WU 呉

DO YOU NOT SEE THIS TRI-PARTITE WORK-PLACE?!

↑ The Three Kingdoms, as in the bloody period of Chinese history

KODA-SAN, A WORD, PLEASE.

...YOU WANT TO WORK IN RADIO...

IS THAT RIGHT?

...BUT YOU DON'T WANT TO STOP WORKING HERE.

SO, FROM WHAT I UNDER-STAND...

I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT WHAT'S NORMAL FOR THE RADIO BUSINESS.

...BUT IT'S PRETTY NORMAL FOR FREELANCE RADIO HOSTS TO HAVE ANOTH-ER JOB ON THE SIDE.

UM... I KNOW IT SOUNDS LIKE I'M BEING VERY SELF-CENTERED...

I'D SOONER BUY A GIRAFFE FOR A PET THAN TAKE YOU AS A MISTRESS!

IF YOU'RE GONNA MAKE ME BE YOUR MISTRESS, THEN I WANT A RAISE, TOO.

GIRAFFES POOP LIKE TEN TIMES MORE THAN I DO.

I'LL AGREE TO KEEP YOU ON, UNDER ONE CON-DITION.

SO, HERE. WOULD YOU USE IT FOR YOUR OPENING JINGLE OR WHATEVER?

MY NEPHEW MAKES MIDI MUSIC AS A HOBBY.

HE SAYS HE'D BE THRILLED IF HIS SONGS WERE PLAYED OVER THE AIR.

WAIT, REALLY?!

LIKE I HAD MUCH OF A CHOICE...

THAT'S ALL.

OKAY...

NAKA-HARA-SAN.

I HEARD YOU THREATENED TO QUIT IF KODA-SAN WAS FIRED.

HE WENT AND USED HIS TRUMP CARD ON ME.

WELL, THAT, TOO...

...BUT I GUESS YOU COULD SAY I'M JUST WHIPPED.

YOU *ARE* WORK BUDDIES, AFTER ALL.

UH-HUH.

EVEN I THINK IT WAS PRETTY UNFAIR, BUT I JUST COULDN'T LET MINARE-SAN GET FIRED.

NAKA-HARA...

FIRST, LET ME THANK YOU.

...GUYS WHO ARE STUPIDLY KIND ARE MORE HEINOUS THAN COLD-HEARTED ONES.

NEXT, ALLOW ME TO SAY ONE THING...

wait
LISTEN
TO ME!

Chapter 28 "I CAN'T TALK ABOUT IT OVER THE PHONE."

BRRRRRR
ブルルルルル
...HELLO. YOU'RE REACHED KUREKO.
YES, SPEAKING.

...YES, I'VE HEARD.

I WAS A LITTLE SUR-PRISED...

PHEW...

SERIOUSLY...?

THE SAME AS HERE, THEN. ALL RIGHT... OKAY, THANK YOU FOR CALLING.

YES... YES...

THAT'S THE ONE THING I REALLY WANT TO AVOID, BUT...

SHIT, MAN! SERI-OUSLY?!

At this rate this is going to be a live, un-cut episode.

Minare... You made your bed, now lie in it.

...BUT SINCE WE CAN'T RECORD ANYTHING ON LOCATION NOW, WHEN IT COMES TO PLANS THAT DON'T REQUIRE ANY PREP WORK...

THE SHOW'S TONIGHT, SO I WENT AHEAD AND PICKED FROM THE LIST I PRE-PARED...

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TURN DOWN OTHER PEOPLE'S IDEAS BUT CAN'T COME UP WITH ANY OF YOUR OWN.

WAS THE ONLY OPTION LEFT. SORRY.

"...AND LET THE LISTENERS DECIDE WHO WAS IN THE RIGHT,"

"GET INTO AN ARGUMENT WITH YOUR PARENTS OVER THE PHONE..."

AHH, SCREW IT!

CLACK CLACK CLACK!

I really screwed up this time. Now that I think about it, this is the worst possible scenario...

I'M ACTUALLY PRETTY EXCITED.

...Hello?

...I KINDA HATE MY NAME, SO DO YOU MIND IF I CHANGE IT TO "MIREI"?

OH... DAD?

IT'S ME, MINARE. YEAH... SORRY TO CALL SO LATE. HEY, LISTEN...

...WHAT *IS* "MINARE," ANYWAY?

I DON'T GET WHAT IT MEANS, AND IT DOESN'T EVEN SOUND VERY NICE. IT'S LIKE, WHERE THE HELL DID YOU PULL THAT FROM?

WHAT LANGUAGE IS THAT?

...HUH?

WE'RE GONNA MAKE THE LISTENERS SETTLE THIS TOPIC?

THIS MIGHT BE A GOOD OP-PORTUNITY TO DECIDE A STAGE NAME FOR HER, TOO. 60% OF MRS'S HOSTS USE ONE.

I mean, for start-ers...

YOU CALL IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT FOR *THIS*?

...SIGH.

I went down to the book-store to buy a book of baby names.

Huh... so it wasn't just random?

That's surprisingly normal of you.

The origin of your name? Let's see...

I think it was two days after you were born.

↑ general-interest magazines

...And while I couldn't find any such book, I had stopped by the magazine corner, and...

FULL COLLECTION
1970-1991

美熟女芸能人秘蔵フォト

HOT COUGAR CELEBS

PRIZED 100-PHOTO SPREAD

MI = HOT

NARE = COUGAR

美熟

VERY WELL. I'LL TELL YOU THE TRUTH.

I'D HAVE PREFERRED TO TAKE THIS TO THE GRAVE WITH ME, IF POSSIBLE.

IT SEEMS YOU'VE SEEN THROUGH MY RUSE.

To be honest, I wouldn't put it past you.

I only said I'll disown you if that's true.

...IF THAT'S TRUE, THEN I'M DISOWNING YOU.

...I had three mistresses at the time.

?!

While Yui was pregnant with you...

JUST LISTEN. WHEN I BROKE UP WITH THEM...

...THE YOUNGEST GIRL SAID THIS TO ME.

YOU'D BET-TER HAVE!

WHAT, DO YOU WANT ME TO PRETEND IT DIDN'T HAPPEN?!

I broke it off with all of them before you were born.

Don't worry, Minare.

HOLD UP, DAD.

THAT'S NOT SOME-THING YOU CAN JOKE AROUND WI—

...YOU COULD SECRETLY NAME HER AFTER ME.

LET'S SAY, IF YOU HAVE A DAUGH-TER...

BUT PLEASE, IF ONLY FOR A FEW SECONDS, I WANT YOU TO THINK ABOUT ME EVERY DAY.

I'LL LET YOU GO BECAUSE I LOVE YOU, MAKO-CHAN.

I SWEAR...

WHY ARE ALL WOMEN LIKE THAT?

WELL... IT WOULD HAVE BEEN FINE IF THAT WAS ALL.

I WON'T TRY TO DRAG YOU DOWN, AND I'M NOT BIG ON BECOMING A HOMEWRECKER.

MAYBE IN RETURN, MAKOTO-SAN...

BUT...

IF YOU END UP HAVING A GIRL...

I GETCHA.

AND HER NAME WAS MINARE, RIGHT?

WHAT THE HELL?!

Nah, her name was Natsuko.

3011

KODA-SAN! YOU HAVE AN ADORABLE LITTLE GIRL!

...I HAVE ANOTHER IDEA IF YOU REFUSE. HEH HEH HEH.

WELL...

...NAME HER AFTER ME.

SHE LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG.

LOOK.

I WANT YOU TO NAME HER, DEAR.

MINARE, THEN.

OKAY.

Michiru
Natsuko
Reiko

UHH...

THWACK
MATO-SAN!
TAK
EXCUSE ME WHILE I GO HOME...
...AND STRANGLE THE LIFE OUT OF MY OLD MAN!
HUH?! WHOA, WHOA.
A DIRECT CONFRONTATION WILL MAKE FOR BETTER FOOTAGE, RIGHT?!
WE DON'T NEED FOOTAGE IN RADIO...

AND WE GO LIVE AT THREE!

HOW?! IT'S ONE IN THE MORN-ING.

MIZUHO, MY ADORABLE AD!

BOOK TWO SEATS FOR THE STARLIGHT KUSHIRO BUS, PRONTO!

NANBA,

ALL YOU NEEDED TO SAY WAS, "IT'S ONE IN THE MORNING."

It's already five hours one-way.

PLUS, WE HAVE TO TALK TO MANAGEMENT BEFORE-HAND...

THE TICKET WINDOW IS CLOSED, AND YOU NEED TO RESERVE FOUR DAYS IN ADVANCE OVER THE PHONE.

TWO PEOPLE, ROUND-TRIP, IS 21,000 YEN...*

*ABOUT $210.

TRASH.

MEN, BY DE-FAULT, ARE JUST...

GOOD EVE-NING!

HEY, THERE.

FINE... I GET IT.

WHAT'S ALL THE HUBBUB?

I'M GONNA TURN THIS INTO A FULL-BLOWN FEMINIST SHOW SO IN-YOUR-FACE THAT EVEN PEOPLE IN THE STATION WILL TIP-TOE AROUND IT LIKE, "KODA-SAN'S SHOW IS ENTERTAINING, BUT IT'S KINDA... Y'KNOW?"

WOMEN MUST HEAL! MEN MUST ROT!

FORGET ALL THAT SHIT ABOUT MAKING THIS A SHOW LIKE A WARM, FLUFFY TOWEL!

IT'S FINE! WHO CARES IF WE POLAR-IZE THE AUDI-ENCE?

WE WON'T GET ANY LISTENERS UNLESS WE DECIDE ON A TARGET DEMO-GRAPHIC!

GIVE ME 30.

...ALL RIGHT.

I WANT TO ROUND UP AND KILL ALL THE MEN IN HOKKAIDO AND TURN THIS INTO A COUNTRY OF WOMEN, LIKE THE KURO-MATSUNAI OF ELD!

NAH, NOTHING LIMP-WRISTED LIKE THAT. MORE... AMAZONIAN.

DO YOU WANT TO MAKE IT LIKE A PUBLIC INFORMATION SHOW ABOUT GENDER QUALITY?

YO.

FIRST TO DIE IS...

BOSS, MITSUO, OR DAD.

WHAT?! ME?!

OKAY! PICK ONE, MIZUHO!

Sapporo

Kuromatsunai

KUROMATSUNAI

A TOWN LOCATED IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF SHIRIBESHI SUBPREFECTURE OF HOKKAIDO. ITS NAME ORIGINATES FROM THE AINU "KURU-MATSU-NAI," OR "VALLEY OF JAPANESE WOMEN." IN OLDEN DAYS, WHEN HOKKAIDO WAS STILL KNOWN AS THE EZO REGION, WIVES WHO FOLLOWED THEIR HUSBANDS NORTH WERE FORBADE BY THE FEUDAL LORD OF THE MATSUMAE PROVINCE FROM TRAVELING FARTHER NORTH THAN CAPE KAMUI. AS SUCH, MANY MAINLAND JAPANESE SETTLED IN THIS REGION. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH "KILLING ALL MEN."

"SINCERELY ANSWER 20 PEOPLE'S RELATIONSHIP QUESTIONS WHILE CLOSE ENOUGH TO SEE A WILD BROWN BEAR."

FORGET WHATEVER PLAN YOU WERE FOLLOWING EARLIER.

I WROTE THIS IN LINES WITH THAT.

FROM THE 10 IDEAS YOU HAD READY...

I THOUGHT IT'D BE A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE KOMOTO AROUND, SO I BROUGHT HIM WITH ME.

OH! THANK YOU.

WE CAN'T RECORD ANYTHING ON LOCATION, SO YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO COOK SOMETHING UP HERE.

WANT ONE?

THERE'RE ONLY TWO HOURS UNTIL THE SHOW, BUT IF WE WANT SOMETHING REALISTIC, IT'S BEST IF WE RECORD SOME-THING.

WANT ME TO WRITE A CUE SHEET?

NAH, WE CAN MAKE ADJUSTMENTS IN 10 MINUTES. I'LL DO IT.

PLUS, IT'S A 20-MINUTE SHOW WITH NO SONGS OR SPOTS, SO WE CAN WING IT WITHOUT ONE IF WE NEED TO.

I TOLD THEM WE'RE RECORDING TODAY, BUT THEY'LL BITE MY HEAD OFF IF WE TAKE TOO LONG.

WE SHOULD PROBABLY TELL MASTER CONTROL...

my butt...

SEE THAT, MINARE-SAN?

...

CHOP CHOP, THAT'S THAT!

...ARE THE SAME ONES COVERING YOUR BUTT!

THE MEN YOU'RE SO DIS-ILLUSIONED WITH...

WOULD YOU MIND USING THIS AS A BASE?

A FULL TRACK, IF POSSIBLE...

PERSONALLY, I THINK THAT MUCH LIMPNESS IS GOOD FOR LATE-NIGHT.

THE STATION SAYS THE OLD ONE'S TOO LIMP.

LET'S REDO THE OPENING WHILE KOMOTO'S HERE.

Limp...z

OH, HEY! ABOUT THE OPENING...

HEY, GUY!

ODORI PARK!

AH PA

ON YOUR MARKS.

GENGHIS KHAN AIN'T SHIT.

ROCKIN' THE SPOT.

LISTEN UP!

JETHRA! JETHRA!

YO YO!

NO... THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE LISTENED TO IT.

IT'S LIKE A RAP BY NORIAKI* AFTER RUNNING A MARATHON AND TRYING TO RECOVER WITHOUT ANY WATER. DID YOU MAKE THIS?

...WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?

*A JAPANESE RAPPER/VOCALIST ACTIVE FROM 2004-2009.

OR ARE YOU SAYIN' YOU'LL MARRY ME AND BRING HOME THE BACON?! HUH, MATO-SAN?!

Giraffe...?

LISTEN, THIS ISN'T JUST *YOUR* SHOW...

WHAT OTHER CHOICE DO I HAVE?! I CAN'T LIVE OFF OF RADIO ALONE!

DO HO HO...

IT'S ACTUALLY THE OWNER OF VOYAGER'S NEPHEW'S.

HE TOLD ME I HAD TO USE IT OR HE'D FIRE ME AND BUY A GIRAFFE.

FWOOO!

IT WENT THROUGH.

THAT THING I MENTIONED BEFORE...

Force of habit.

Y'know, you can smoke your e-cig inside.

SORRY TO GRAB YOU ON YOUR WAY OUT.

TELL THAT TO KOMOTO. I JUST DECIDED TO PEEK IN ON THE BOOTH.

...

YOU MEAN...THE ARAKAWA RANZOU AWARD?!

I SEE...

SO, YOU'RE FINALLY LEAVING MRS, HUH?

HEY.

...

WELL, I GUESS THERE'S NOT MUCH ELSE FOR PEOPLE TO DO WHEN THEY'RE SNOWED IN DURING THE HOKKAIDO WINTER.

WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT THE AINU LANGUAGE WAS SO FULL OF DIRTY JOKES?

HAVE A SEAT. TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!

APPARENTLY, THEY'RE CONSIDERING DOING A SHOW TO TEACH AINU. LOOK, THERE'S EVEN A LITTLE DICTIONARY AT THE BACK. IT'S PRETTY NEAT.

IT'S A PRESENTATION BOOK MY DAD GOT FROM SOMEONE AT STV RADIO.

ARE YOU STUDYING AINU?

WHEN I SAW *MONTY PYTHON* IN LONDON...

...BUT IT WASN'T THE HUMOR I WANT TO STRIVE FOR.

...IT WAS REALLY COOL, DARK, AND AWESOME...

THAT'S THE KIND OF RADIO I WANNA DO SOMEDAY.

HUMOR IS SUPER IMPORTANT.

I LOVE IT! THE FACT THAT THERE'S SO MANY JOKES GOES TO SHOW HOW MATURE THEIR CULTURE IS.

HEH HEH... Y'KNOW, WHILE FLIPPING THROUGH THIS BOOK...

...I GOT A REALLY DUMB IDEA. LIKE, SAY, IF I HAD A CHILD...

MINA: TO LAUGH
MINAUNIN: T
MINAKU
MIN

MINAHAU: LA
MINARUSHI:

...I MIGHT WANT TO GIVE THEM A NAME LIKE THIS.

I THINK LAUGHS YOU GET FROM MAKING A FOOL OF YOURSELF ARE THE PRICELESS ONES.

NOT THE KIND WHERE YOU MAKE A FOOL OF SOMEONE ELSE FOR LAUGHS.

MINARE— "TO MAKE SOMEONE LAUGH."

Chapter 29 "YOU CAN'T SAVE EVERYONE."

GENGHIS KHAN AIN'T SHIT.

MIRS

YO YO!

JETHRA! JETHRA! LISTEN UP!

ODORI PARK.

HEY, GUY!

This is Minare Koda's *Wave, Listen to...*

Meeheee!

3:30 IN THE MORNING.

IT'S CURRENTLY OCTOBER 4TH,

M'KAY.

I'M YOUR SAPPORO BIOLOGICAL NOISE DIRECTOR, MINARE KODA.

I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER WHAT YOU'RE ALL HOPING FOR BY STAYING UP THIS LATE.

Well, then. Are you all aware what day October 4th is?

In doing so, Russia pulled ahead in the space race and thoroughly left the USA's pride in tatters. To think such an era existed.

Today marks the 58th anniversary of when humanity's first satellite, Sputnik I, was launched into orbit.

A NATIONAL BIRD IS JUST ONE SUBSET OF NATIONAL ANIMALS ANY NATION CAN HAVE.

FOR EXAMPLE, THE GREEN PHEASANT.

THAT'S JAPAN'S NATIONAL BIRD.

ARE YOU ALL FAMILIAR WITH THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL ANIMALS?

LITERALLY ANIMALS REPRESENTING A NATION.

YES, NATIONAL ANIMALS.

UHH. SPEAKING OF RUSSIA...

WITH THAT LOVELY SEGUE, I HAVE A CONFESSION TO MAKE.

UHH. ANYWAY...

AND NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, I BELIEVE THE MASCOT FOR THE 1980 MOSCOW SUMMER OLYMPICS AND THE 2014 SOCHI WINTER OLYMPICS WERE BOTH BEARS.

AS FOR RUSSIA, THEIR NATIONAL ANIMAL IS THE BEAR.

...BY A BROWN BEAR.

AS WE SPEAK, I'M BEING STARED DOWN...

KOFF KOFF
KOFF KOFF
KOFF KOFF

*IMAGE FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES.

FRANKLY, I'M NOT CONFIDENT IN MY ABILITY TO CARRY OUT THIS BROADCAST IN STANDARD FASHION...

I NEGLECTED TO MENTION, BUT THIS EPISODE IS BEING BROADCAST FROM MOUNT SAPPORO.

AND I DON'T MEAN AT A ZOO. IN THE MOUNTAINS! BY A STREAM!

A STREAM NOT EVEN 15 METERS FROM WHERE I'M STANDING!

KOFF KOFF

I didn't know we had that kind of sound...

"Bear breath..."

I'VE BEEN LISTENING SINCE YOUR FIRST BAFFLING RADIO DRAMA."

"GOOD EVENING, MISS MINARE.

LET'S SEE... I'LL DO MY BEST TO READ THESE QUIETLY SO AS NOT TO BE DISCOVERED. WHILE I'M STILL ALIVE, ANYWAY.

YET EVEN IN THIS SITUATION...

FOR SOME REASON, THE EMAILS KEEP POURING IN!

"I SPEND A MILLION YEN* PER YEAR ON THE NATIONAL TAX AGENCY'S REAL-LIFE CASH SHOP, Y'KNOW!

WHAT THE HELL KIND OF SHIP DO THEY RUN WHERE I CAN'T EVEN SAVE?!"

"WHO SHOULD I COMPLAIN TO, THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, LABOR AND WELFARE?!"

"RIGHT BEFORE THE ACT, I SERIOUSLY THOUGHT...

'UGH, I WISH I COULD SAVE HERE.'"

"NOW THINGS ARE REALLY AWKWARD BETWEEN US AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT."

"LAST WEEK, I PROFESSED MY LOVE TO MY CO-WORKER AND WAS GLORIOUSLY REJECTED."

*ABOUT $10,000.

SEEING AS I'M BEING STARED DOWN BY A BROWN BEAR, I'LL BE BRIEF...

UHH...

ﾍﾟﾗﾘ FLAP

LOOK AT KOTOOSHU'S** BLOG AND SOOTHE YOUR WOUNDED SOUL.

**KOTOOSHU KATSUNORI, A FORMER BULGARIA-BORN SUMO WRESTLER.

"ALSO, SHE LAYS BATCHES OF EGGS EVERY MORNING. I'M ABSOLUTELY TERRIFIED."

"THE GIRL I'M DATING HAS BEEN KIND OF... DIFFERENT LATELY."

"GOOD EVENING. I'M AN UNSIGHTLY MAN ATTENDING A FASHION VOCATIONAL SCHOOL."

"SHOULD I START A RELIGION?"

"DO YOU THINK MY GIRLFRIEND IS TURNING INTO A NYMPH OR SOMETHING?"

"IN FACT, BUTTERFLIES ARE DRAWN TO HER ARMPITS AND PRIVATES. BUTTERFLIES!"

"RATHER, SHE SMELLS REALLY GOOD FOR SOME REASON."

THE BEAR'S STILL THERE, SO...

...UHH...

...LOOK AT KOTOOSHU'S BLOG AND SOOTHE YOUR WOUNDED SOUL.

FLAP

UMM, LET ME REMIND YOU PEOPLE...

...THAT I'M CURRENTLY STANDING FACE TO FACE WITH A BROWN BEAR...

...AND I'M NOT EVEN SURE IF I'LL LIVE THROUGH THIS BROAD-CAST!

"I'M TIRED OF PEER PRESSURE FROM PEOPLE WHO HATE PINEAPPLE IN FOOD."

GATHO

For all I know, I could be dinner a minute from now!

Regardless, I'm trying to answer all your life's woes.

"I feel like my future is constantly covered in a fog of anxiety. Do you know where I'm coming from, Minare-san?"

You're too soft!

What are you, a soufflé doria from Hoshino Coffee?!

"AHH. MY INSIGNIFICANT EXISTENCE MIGHT BE OVER...

...BUT I'M GLAD I WAS ABLE TO LEAVE EVEN THE SLIGHTEST MARK ON SOMEONE'S LIFE."

GIVE ME AT LEAST ONE SERIOUS QUESTION THAT'LL MAKE ME THINK THAT, PLEASE.

READ KOTOO-SHU'S BLOG.

IT'LL BRING YOU MORE COMFORT THAN MY HALF-ASSED THERAPY.

"I WAS PISSED FROM TOBACCO WITHDRAWAL AND PICKED A FIGHT WITH A MIDDLE SCHOOLER, ONLY TO GET MY ASS KICKED FOR TWO HOURS STRAIGHT. NOW BOTH MY BODY AND HEART ARE BRUISED. PLEASE HELP."

OR GET AN AIRBOARD, MAYBE?

YOU'RE ONLY THAT WEAK-KNEED BECAUSE YOUR CORE IS WEAK!

PICK UP KYOKU-SHIN KARATE!

WE ONLY HAVE FIVE MINUTES LEFT, TOO...

AH, CRAP ...

Kotooshu?

TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP

GYAHHHH!

"I'M A MARRIED OFFICE WORKER LIVING IN SAPPORO."

"HELLO, MINARE-SAN."

"26 YEARS OLD." HUH, WE'RE THE SAME AGE.

UHH. NEXT UP...

HUFF PUFF

"WE GOT CLOSER, ONE THING LED TO ANOTHER,"

"AND EVENTU-ALLY..."

"THERE IS A MARRIED MAN ONE YEAR MY SENIOR WHO WORKS ON THE SAME FLOOR AS ME. LET'S CALL HIM B-SAN."

"WE HAD SE—"

FWUMP

"...AN AFFAIR."

"IT TURNS OUT WE'VE BOTH BEEN MARRIED FOR THE SAME AMOUNT OF TIME AND ENDED UP BONDING OVER OUR PAST NEWLYWED EXPERIENCES DURING BREAK TIME."

"TO BE HONEST, I WAS SCARED THAT WHAT I EXPERIENCED MIGHT'VE BEEN THE SWEET TASTE OF INFIDELITY."

"I WAS FILLED WITH A DEEP SENSE OF SATISFACTION I HAVEN'T FELT WITH MY HUSBAND IN A LONG TIME."

"I TURNED HIM DOWN BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID OF LETTING IT BECOME A ONGOING THING."

"THREE DAYS LATER, B-SAN ASKED IF I WANTED TO GET A HOTEL WITH HIM AGAIN AS IF IT WAS THE MOST NATURAL THING IN THE WORLD."

AH...

THE MOOD'S CHANGED. THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GET GOOD.

OOP.

I JUST GET THE FEELING THAT MIXING'S GONNA BE A PAIN IN THE ASS.

ゴォォォォォォォォ...

A CRAZY SETUP, AS USUAL.

The hell?

WHAT'S WITH THE YELLING?

SHE'S SUPPOSED TO BE WEAK AND OUT OF BREATH WITH THE BEAR'S CHEWING SOUNDS OVER IT.

HAH!

ORA-AAH!

"MY HUSBAND IS A KIND, EARNEST MAN, AND I HAVE NO INTENTION OF LEAVING HIM...

...BUT PHYSI-CALLY, I'M MORE COMPATI-BLE WITH B-SAN."

NO... I CAN SEE IT.

HUFF

FWOO

MINARE-SAN...

...IS FIGHTING THE BEAR.

FAITHFULNESS!

NO GREATER VIRTUE EXISTS!

YOU MUST OPEN YOUR EYES!

I GAVE INTO LIBIDO...

...AND CHOSE A CUTE, BUT UNFAITHFUL MAN.

AND NOW HERE I AM FIGHTING A BEAR.

"Should I stay with my loving husband for the rest of my life?"

"Or should I let my body's urges take the wheel?"

"TYPICALLY FOR MY PRE-BED ROUTINE, I WANDER THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD WEARING NOTHING BUT A TRENCH COAT."

"I'M A 41-YEAR-OLD OFFICE WORKER. LATELY, MY BODY'S AGING HAS BE-COME APPARENT, AND IT HAS ME DEPRESSED."

"HOWEVER, THE OTHER DAY, I WAS FINALLY ARRESTED DURING THE ACT. I USED TO BE ABLE TO ESCAPE NO PROBLEM IN MY THIRTIES."

"ANY-WAY..."

"WHO DO THEY THINK IS PUTTING FOOD ON THE TABLE?"

SE-YAH!

KAH!

...AND MY DAUGHTER TOLD ME TO DROP DEAD."

"MY WIFE HANDED ME DIVORCE PAPERS WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A WORD...

"Minare-san, would you please give me some words of encourage-ment to put my mind at ease?"

WE'LL JUST HAVE TO TWEAK A DOG'S.

OF COURSE NOT.

DO WE HAVE A SOUND FOR A HURT BEAR?

"I honestly think that I want to keep working until my daughter is an adult, even if it means being whipped the whole time."

WHO CARES ABOUT AGE?! ANY SANE PERSON WILL TELL YOU ANY AGE UNDER 60 MAKES YOU A YOUNG-STER!

STAY ALIVE!

STAY TRUE TO YOURSELF!

...AS LONG AS YOU LIVE YOUR LIFE HONESTLY, SOMEONE IS BOUND TO OFFER YOU A HELPING HAND!

EVEN IF YOU STUM-BLE,

AND HIT ROCK BOTTOM...

KATHUNK

SO WHY... DID I REACH FOR A PIECE OF SHIT? THAT'S BECAUSE...

...WHO WOULD DO THE SAME FOR ME.

THERE ARE SO MANY PEO-PLE...

...WE SEE OUR-SELVES IN OTHERS!

I WANT TO LIVE THAT WAY, TOO.

HON-ESTLY, I...

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT...

WELL, WHATEVER. GOOD WORK.

When it comes to the adlib bits, you always scrape off a little bit of your heart and serve it to the listeners, huh?

IT JUST KINDA HAPPENS...

DO YOU THINK I GET OFF ON THIS?!

COPYING DATA 100%

COPYING DATA 72%

TAK TAK TAK

SOMETHING CAUGHT MY ATTENTION.

I'LL GO WITH YOU, MATO-SAN.

HM? SURE.

the content's as bizarre as ever, though.

PLUS, IT WAS THE EASIEST ONE TO READ SO FAR, AND IT HAD BARELY ANY BLANKS IN IT.

I MEAN, YOU WROTE A SCRIPT FOR ME WITHOUT EVEN BEING ASKED TO.

KUREKO-SAN.

DID SOMETHING GOOD HAPPEN? LIKE YOU WERE FINALLY CURED OF CHRONIC HEMORRHOIDS OR SOME-THING?

HUH?

WELL, THEY KEEP ME AROUND FOR TIMES LIKE THESE, AFTER ALL.

?

I'M GLAD YOU LIKED IT.

CONSIDER IT MY PARTING GIFT.

DO YOU MIND IF I TAKE A LOOK, MATO-SAN?

HM? GO FOR IT.

HEY, GUY!

This is Minare Koda's *Wave, Listen to Meeheeee!*

JETHRA! JETHRA! LISTEN UP!

YO YO!

GENGHIS KHAN AIN'T SHIT.

LET ME JUST ISOLATE IT...

THERE'S ANOTHER RAP LAYERED BENEATH THIS SINGLE AT HIGH PITCH.

HUH... YOU'RE RIGHT.

..ger.

Bread.

IS IT COOL IF I TAKE OFF NOW, MATO-SAN?

MIZUHO, TOO, IF THAT'S OKAY.

SURE, BUT I CAN GIVE YOU A LIFT IF YOU WAIT 20 MINUTES.

...AND LOWER THE PITCH.

Bread.

Tasty bread.

Tasty bread.

Soup curry.

Soup curry.

VOYAGER.

VOYAGER.

SIIIGH

Soup curry...

...WELL, DAMN.

WE CAN'T PLAY THIS ON AIR.

MATO-SAN...

THIS COUNTS AS SUBLIMINAL ADVERTIS-ING.

Tasty bread.

SON OF A...

MINARE.

WE GOTTA DO A RETAKE.

IN THE END, THE DATA FOR THE SHOW ONLY MADE IT TO MASTER CONTROL AT 3:15 AM, JUST BEFORE THE SLOT TIME. THE NEXT DAY, BOTH MATO-SAN AND MINARE WERE CHEWED OUT BY KIKUKAWA-SAN, THE STATION PRODUCER. AS OPPOSED TO THE FIRST RECORDING, IN WHICH MINARE LAID HERSELF BARE WITH UNPROMPTED ADLIB, THE SHOCK OF A SECOND RECORDING LEFT HER UNENTHUSIASTICALLY FOLLOWING KUREKO'S SCRIPT TO A T, SOLEMNLY GIVING LIFE ADVICE WHILE BEING EATEN BY A BROWN BEAR.

BOOSH!!

wave

LISTEN TO ME!

Chapter 30 "MY HEART WON'T REACH YOU."

VOYAGER

VOYAGER

MORNIN'.

OW, OW, OW, OW!

GRG

ギリギリ

GRG

GRG

GRG

KODA-SAN.

I ALMOST LOST MY SHOW BECAUSE OF YOU!

YOU DIDN'T MENTION YOU PUT A SUBLIMINAL MESSAGE IN IT.

I TAKE IT THE FACT THAT YOU DIDN'T USE THE AUDIO I GAVE YOU MEANS YOU'RE PREPARED FOR THE WORST?

I LISTENED TO YOUR SHOW LAST NIGHT.

Not cool...

THAT'S PRETTY MESSED UP, TAKARADA-SAN...

IS THAT TRUE, SIR...?

?

YOU CAN PLAY INNOCENT LIKE A FRESHLY-BUILT BOY ROBOT ALL YOU WANT. I'M NOT LETTING YOU OFF.

SUBLIM-INAL...?

WHAT'S THAT MEAN?

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT! NO MORE UNDER-HANDED TRICKS!

I'LL SPONSOR YOUR SHOW!

BUT IN RETURN, I WANT YOU TO PLUG "VOYAGER: A DREAMLAND OF BREAD AND CURRY" AT THE BEGINNING *AND* END.

WAIT, SERI-OUSLY?!

YOU CAN'T FOOL ME BY--

GETTING A PATRON MIGHT LOWER THE CHANCES OF MY SHOW GETTING CUT...

HOW MUCH ARE YOU WILLING TO PAY?!

*100 YEN IS ABOUT $1.

50,000* PER MONTH?

THAT'LL BUY YOU A ONE-SYLLABLE PLUG.

THEN...

HOW ABOUT 50,500?

KEEP OFFERING AT THAT RATE AND THE STORE'S GONNA CLOSE BEFORE YOU MEET THE MINIMUM BID.

FOR A BUSINESS OWNER, YOU DON'T GIVE A CRAP ABOUT BETTERING THE ATMOSPHERE IN THE WORK-PLACE, DO YOU?

JUST PULLING YOUR LEG.

JUST SO YOU KNOW, MADOKA CHISHIRO HAS THE PERSON-ALITY OF A SPITTOON!

I'D SOONER PAY A HUNDRED TIMES MORE TO SPONSOR SOMETHING LIKE MADOKA CHISHIRO'S SHOW...

...THAN SOME NOBODY'S SKETCHY LATE-NIGHT TALK SHOW WHICH GOD KNOWS WHO IS LISTEN-ING TO.

MIND IF I DO SOME WORK HERE?

Frankly, the fact that we have these meetings every week is tormenting enough...

SHE SHOWED UP AT OUR EVAL-UATION SESSION AGAIN THIS MORNING EVEN THOUGH SHE HAD NO BUSI-NESS THERE...

HMM...

Things that made you laugh out loud recently

I JUST REALIZED I HAVEN'T HAD A GOOD BELLY LAUGH IN A WHILE.

WE'LL SEE WHO'S LAUGHING WHEN I RUN YOU OVER.

EXCUSE ME, KODA-SAN?

WHAT THE?! WHAT FOR?

WOULD YOU MIND TALKING ABOUT YOUR DREAMS OR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE FOR A MINUTE?

...WE MIGHT BE KINDRED SPIRITS.

YOU MIGHT BE ONTO SOME-THING. IF YOU COULD BOTH GET LOST IN THE MOUNTAINS TOGETHER, THAT'D BE GREAT.

I FEEL A SENSE OF FELLOWSHIP WITH THIS GIRL.

...

IT'S BEEN LIKE THIS WITH HER NONSTOP LATELY.

NANBA

THUD

Feed us.

Hey, are you listening?

Feed us.

Huh!

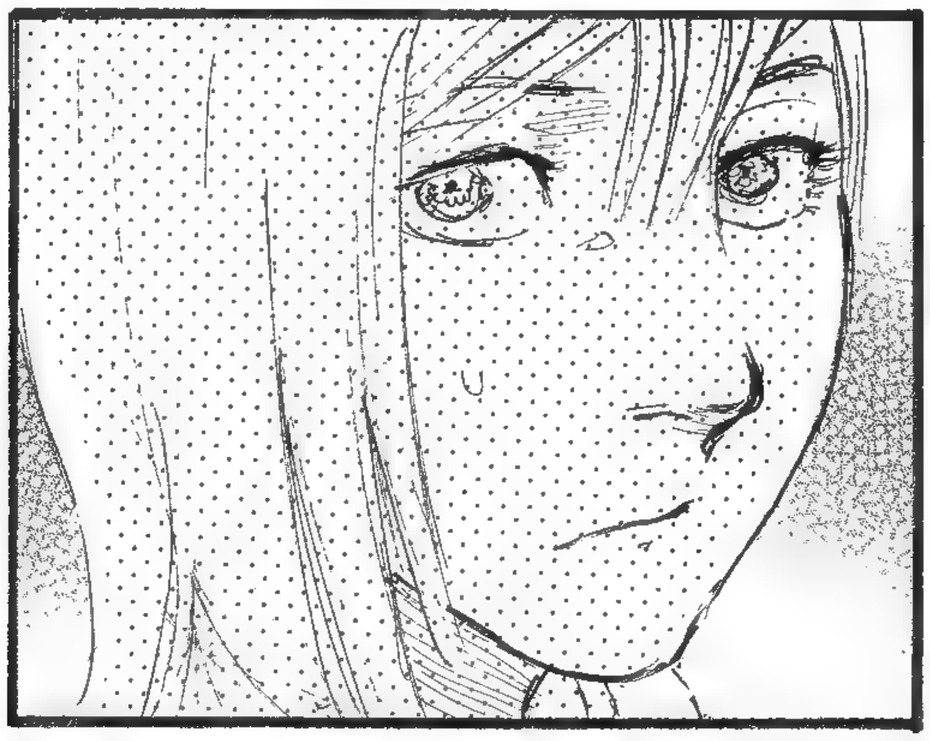
whoa!

AH...

WELCOME BACK, MINARE-SAN.

M-MIZUHO...

she's using the turtles like doctor fish...



EVER HEARD OF THE ARAKAWA RANZOU AWARD?

THAT'S THE LITERARY AWARD FOR SUSPENSE AND MYSTERY STUFF, RIGHT?

KEIGO NISHINO, NATSUO KIRINO, AND JUN IDOBASHI HAVE ALL GOTTEN IT BEFORE.

BUT...

THEY TOLD ME MY NAME WOULD BE IN THIS MONTH'S *NOVEL NOUVEAU* AS A FINALIST FOR THE THIRD ROUND OF SCREENING.

GOOD TASTE.

I READ THAT GENRE A LOT. I LIKE NOVELS WHERE MORE THAN THREE PEOPLE DIE.

YOU KNOW YOUR STUFF.

...TO MAKE IT THROUGH THE FOURTH ROUND WHERE THE WINNER IS DECIDED...

...TALENT ALONE ISN'T ENOUGH...

BASICALLY, NO ONE BOTHERS WITH THE AWARD UNLESS THEY WANT A CAREER WRITING FOR KOBAMSHA.

THE PHONE CALL AFTER THE THIRD ROUND IS TO MAKE SURE YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING PLANNED.

YOU'VE GOT TWO MONTHS AFTER WINNING THE PRIZE TO ANNOUNCE A NEW BOOK IN ONE OF KOBAMSHA'S LITERARY MAGAZINES.

BUT EVEN THOUGH I'M HERE EVERY DAY,

...I'M NOT WRITING ANYTHING OF SIGNIFICANT QUANTITY OR QUALITY.

BETWEEN TWO WEEKLY SHOWS AND A ONE-SHOT SCRIPT...

I'M AT MRS FOR OVER 12 HOURS EVERY DAY,

I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT I'VE PRETTY MUCH GOT MY HANDS FULL AS IT IS.

AND IN WHAT FREE TIME I HAVE, I WRITE ABOUT 30,000 CHARACTERS PER MONTH BETWEEN TWO S&M MAGS.

DON'T SWEAT IT.

SORRY TO SAY SO AFTER YOU THREW ME A BONE, MATO.

IT MIGHT BE TIME TO GIVE UP ON RADIO.

TO BE HON-EST...

I GOT FED UP WITH MYSELF EVERY TIME I ENTERED THE CON-TEST. I'M WAY PAST THE AGE FOR AN AMATEUR AWARD.

Mrs. Missile
The Lustful Launch Family
Hisaki Kou

HERE. you can have it.

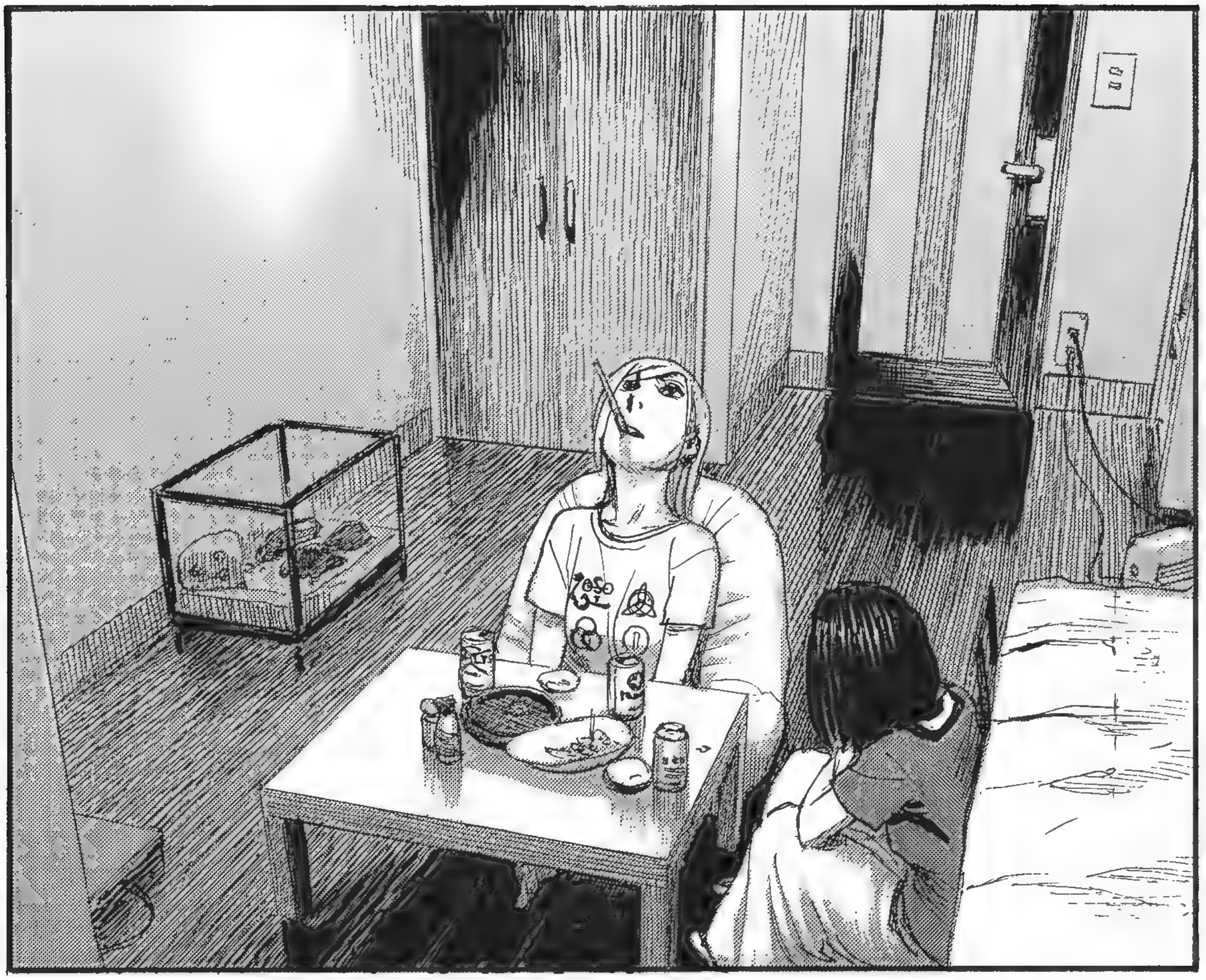
WHAT KINDA EROTIC NOVELS DO YOU WRITE?

IF THERE'S ANY HOPE FOR A 52-YEAR-OLD WRITER WHO NEVER BROKE OUT OF OBSCURITY TO HAVE A TURNING POINT IN LIFE, THIS IS MY LAST CHANCE.

BUT...

...I'VE GOT NO WIFE, NO KIDS, AND NO ASSETS.

HELL, EVEN I'M SURPRISED THAT I STILL HAVE THE DESIRE TO MAKE A CHANGE.



OKAY, LET'S GET TO BED. WE BOTH HAVE AN EARLY DAY TO-MORROW.
SURE...
OH... YEAH.
HM?
IT'D BE GREAT... IF KUREKO-SAN WINS, HUH?

DO YOU REALLY FEEL THAT WAY, MIZUHO?

ISN'T THERE A PART OF YOU THAT WANTS HIM TO LOSE?

AFTER ALL, YOUR DREAM IS...

I'M GOING TO DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO BECOME A CHIEF DIRECTOR WITHIN THE NEXT TWO YEARS!

AND WITH YOU, MINARE KODA, AS MY MAIN DJ...

AND KATSUMI KUREKO ONBOARD AS A SCRIPTWRITER, IN THE STRONGEST LINEUP I CAN IMAGINE...

...I'LL CONVINCE THE PRODUCER TO LET ME MANAGE AN ENTIRE THREE-HOUR BLOCK!

PHEW... TIME TO SLEEP...

I WANT TO CUDDLE UP TO HER AND PAT HER ON THE BACK!

OH, GOD! THAT'S SO HEART-BREAKING!

AND STEAL A KISS WHILE I'M AT IT...

...MAY-BE I'LL READ A LITTLE FIRST.

with my janky phone and a flashlight

NOW THE DAUGHTER'S UP ON THE LAUNCH PAD...

OH, MAN...

...

HUH? OH...

WHERE'S TACHIBANA-SAN?

CHUUYA.

I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HER SINCE...

SHE SAID SHE HAD SOMETHING TO DO AND LEFT THE STORE AROUND 10:30.

THWACK

I THINK SHE'LL BE BACK SOON. SHE'S GONNA HAVE A ROUGH DAY TOMORROW IF SHE DOESN'T GET SOME SLEEP.

WHAT? IT'S TWO IN THE MORN-ING, YOU KNOW.

ALL THE MORE REASON TO BE WORRIED! GO LOOK FOR HER, DUMBASS!

I DID... BUT SHE WOULDN'T ANSWER!

WHY HAVEN'T YOU TRIED CALLING HER?!

DON'T GIVE ME THAT BULL-SHIT!

BRRR

BUT WHERE THE HELL DO I EVEN START LOOKING?

I GUESS SHE HAS BEEN GONE A LITTLE TOO LONG.

...Hello?

OH, GOOD. YOU ANSWERED.

I'M JUST CALLING SINCE IT'S SO LATE AND ALL. DID YOU TAKE CARE OF WHATEVER YOU NEEDED TO?

Oh... Yes, I did. Sorry...

HM...? ARE YOU DRUNK?

WHERE ARE YOU? I'LL COME PICK YOU UP...

UH-HUH... WHAT?

YOU'RE THAT CLOSE?!

AHH... I WAS JUST HAVING A LITTLE TOAST BY MYSELF...

IT'S COOL, AS LONG AS YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.

BUT IT'S PROBABLY NOT A GOOD IDEA FOR A GIRL TO HANG OUT ALONE IN THE PARK AT NIGHT.

SORRY...

I SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST CALLED...

A TOAST TO WHAT? DID SOMETHIN' GOOD HAP-PEN?

YES! SOME-THING WONDER-FUL...

OH, YEAH? WHAT?

I WAS SO NERVOUS TODAY, I...

UM...

I PROMISE I'LL TELL YOU EVEN-TUALLY...

OH... OKAY.

WELL, EITHER WAY...

...NAKA-HARA-SAN.

CLAT

I'M TERRIFIED...

CLAT

...

...I'VE DECIDED SO MANY THINGS ON MY OWN WITHOUT EVEN CONSULTING MY BROTHER.

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME...

BUT I'M ALSO REALLY EXCITED.

AND I MIGHT CAUSE TROUBLE FOR A LOT OF PEOPLE.

I MIGHT EVEN MAKE ENEMIES.

I MIGHT... END UP MAKING A LOT OF WRONG DECISIONS.

I PROMISE THAT SOME-DAY...

...I'LL PAY YOU BACK FOR ALL OF YOUR KINDNESS.

BUT... EVEN IF I'M WRONG,

I WANT YOU... TO SEE MY JOURNEY THROUGH... TO THE VERY END.

WE LOOK OUTSIDE OURSELVES FOR STRENGTH AND CONFI-DENCE...

...BUT IT COMES FROM WITHIN. IT'S THERE ALL THE TIME.

...I ALSO PLAN TO LEAVE VOYAGER AND START MY OWN RESTAU-RANT.

SOME-DAY...

...AND FIND YOUR-SELF WITH NO WAY OUT...

IF YOU END UP LOSING YOUR WAY DOWN THE ROAD...

I THOUGHT THAT WAS SOMETHING FROM FREUD...

HUH? IS THAT SO?

IT'S A LINE FROM A LATE-NIGHT DRAMA CALLED *GOKAIDOCHU HIZAGERUGE.*

ER... SORRY. THAT'S PROBABLY WHO IT'S ORIGINALLY FROM...

THEN AGAIN, JUST WATCH-ING YOU WORK, I THINK YOU COULD PROB-ABLY SUCCEED IN ALL SORTS OF FIELDS.

I'LL PAY YOU A PROPER SALARY.

...THEN COME WORK AT MY PLACE.

NAKA-
HARA-
SAN...

OH...

YOU'RE
SO...!

WHA—
HUH?!

"THE GREAT QUESTION THAT HAS NEVER BEEN ANSWERED, AND WHICH I HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO ANSWER, DESPITE MY 30 YEARS OF RESEARCH INTO THE FEMININE SOUL, IS 'WHAT DOES A WOMAN WANT?'"

–SIGMUND FREUD

WHAT PART OF OUR CONVERSA-TION MADE YOU CRY?

UHH... MY BAD! WAIT...

I SWEAR, BECAUSE YOU ALWAYS SAY THINGS LIKE THAT OUT OF KINDNESS,

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH I...

OH, GOD...

Chapter 31 "I WANT TO CHASE AFTER YOU."

sleep → deprived

HUH?!

WHAT CAUSES A WOMAN TO GET EMO-TIONALLY UNSTABLE?

OF COURSE I'LL CONNECT THE DOTS IF YOU BRING THAT UP AS SOON AS SHE GOES TO THE BATHROOM.

ERR... HOW DID YOU KNOW?!

WHAT, ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT TACHIBANA-SAN?

*A WOMAN WHO COMES RUNNING AT THE SMELL OF GOSSIP

...TO A SOLO RAGER ...

TO FREUD, EH?

A BRAIN CHOP...

I SEE, I SEE.

*

UHH, WELL...

C'MON, LAY IT ON ME!

SINCE YOU SEEM LIKE THE KINDA GUY WHO TENDS TO OVERLOOK BASIC STUFF, I'LL LET YOU IN ON SOME-THING.

NAKA-HARA-KUN.

Lessee...

I DON'T THINK FREUD'S GOT MUCH TO DO WITH IT...

FREUD ...?

WOMEN ONLY LET THEMSELVES BE EMOTION-ALLY UN-STABLE...

...AROUND THE PERSON THEY'RE MOST ATTACHED TO.

!

A WOMAN WHO DOESN'T GIVE A RAT'S ASS ABOUT YOU...

...WON'T CRY OR GET ANGRY NO MATTER WHAT SORT OF INSENSITIVE STUFF YOU SAY TO THEM.

THIS IS FEMALE ECOLOGY 101.

INSTEAD, THEY'LL JUST BACK OFF AND EMBELLISH THE STORY TO THEIR FRIENDS LATER AND TALK SHIT ABOUT YOU.

WELL, YOU HAVE PUNCHED ME IN THE FACE WHILE MAKING A BIZARRE SOUND LIKE "KUKAAAH" BEFORE, BUT...

SURELY YOU GET THAT JUST BY LOOKING AT HOW COLD I GET WHEN WE TALK, RIGHT?

TACHIBANA-SAN LIKES YOU.

EITHER GIVE UP ON ME AND APPROACH HER WITH SINCERITY,

OR STOP BEING SO IRRESPONSI-BLY KIND IN A WAY THAT GIVES HER THE WRONG IDEA.

NAKAHARA-KUN...

YOU CAN'T DODGE THE ISSUE FOREVER.

SERIOUSLY? THIS IS THE SAME GUY WHO GETS FULL OF HIMSELF AT EVERY LITTLE THING WHEN HE TALKS TO ME...

Pisses me off...

HUH? TACHIBANA-SAN LIKES *ME*?

HA! HA! HA!

NO WAY! YOU'RE OVER-ESTIMATING ME!

I MEAN, SURE, SHE EXPRESSES HER GRATITUDE TO ME FOR GIVING HER A PLACE TO STAY SOME-TIMES, BUT...

Seicomart

NINETY PER-CENT OF THE BREAKDOWNS WOMEN EXPERIENCE ARE DUE TO THE MAN THEY'RE TALKING TO!

KEEP THIS IN MIND WHEN YOU GO HOME TONIGHT, OKAY?

ANYWAY!

I WAS JUST RUMINATING ON THE RAGE I FELT EARLIER TO-DAY.

NO-THING.

...? NINETY PERCENT OF WHAT?

SORRY ABOUT THIS.

I HAVEN'T HAD ANY TIME TO GO SHOP-PING.

HOT CHEF

WANNA GET SOME CURRIED PORK SKEW-ERS?

OOH! A SPLENDID IDEA!

IT'S NO BIGGIE.

REALLY, YOU SHOULD LEARN HOW TO SLACK OFF MORE.

OH? LAY IT ON ME!

SO, ABOUT THE BROADCAST THE OTHER DAY...

WE GOT A NUMBER OF EMAILS AFTER-WARD,

MOST OF WHICH WERE LIFE COUNSELING QUESTIONS.

SERIOUSLY? WE DIDN'T EVEN ASK FOR ANY...

GOT ANY EXAM-PLES?

AT THIS RATE, THE SHOW'S GOING TO TURN INTO AN *OGIRI* OF ANSWERING DUMBASS QUESTIONS UNDER THE GUISE OF LIFE COUNSELING...

SOME-THING MUST BE DONE!

AH, SHIT...

"WHEN I PROPOSED TO MY GIRL-FRIEND, SHE RESPOND-ED WITH, '*KANIKUSO PORIPORI*.' WHAT EXACTLY DOES THAT MEAN?"

I WANT IT TO BE LIKE A WARM, FLUFFY TOWEL, GOD-DAMMIT!

AND I DON'T LIKE THAT MY SHOW IS BEING COMPARED WITH A COMEDY SLOT.

GETTING THIS MUCH MATERIAL FROM LISTEN-ERS WITHOUT A WRITER'S HELP JUST DOESN'T HAPPEN OUTSIDE OF COMEDIAN-HOSTED SHOWS.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT? *OGIRI* IS A FUNDA-MENTAL PART OF RADIO.

THUD

THUD

THUD

HI
PS
PS

PS
PS
PS
PS

...THAT WHENEVER SOMETHING SAD HAPPENS OR HER STRESS EXCEEDS PERMITTABLE LEVELS, MIZUHO DEVOTES HER HEART AND SOUL TO HONING HER KITCHEN KNIVES.

I'VE LEARNED ...

FWOO

SNAP

...BUT AT THIS RATE, THESE KNIVES WILL SURPASS THE SWORDS AT THE BIZEN OSAFUNE*.

SHE'S PUTTING ON A CHEERFUL FRONT SO SHE DOESN'T WORRY ME...

*A MUSEUM OF *KATANA* PRODUCED IN THE BIZEN PROVINCE.

MRS

KUREKO-SAN.

WHEN EXACTLY ARE YOU GOING TO LEAVE MRS?

YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE I CAN'T LEAVE SOON ENOUGH.

I'LL STOP WRITING SMUT FIRST.

RIGHT NOW, I'M WRITING FOR ONE PAPER AND ONE WEB MAGAZINE. IN TWO MORE PAPER AND ONE MORE WEB PUBLICATIONS, I'LL HAVE ENOUGH FOR A BOOK...

...SO I'LL BREAK IT OFF THEN.

MY CONTRACT WITH THE STATION ENDS MARCH OF NEXT YEAR.

THEY SAID THEY DON'T MIND RENEWING MY CONTRACT IF I DON'T GET THE REWARD, BUT...

AH, SO IT'S STILL A WAYS OFF.

YOU SAID "PARTING GIFT" THAT TIME, SO I FIGURED IT'D BE SOONER.

I'VE WRITTEN EROTIC NOVELS FOR OVER 20 YEARS UNDER THE PENNAME HISAKI KURE.

I'D LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT, BUT WHO KNOWS?

one due in 30 minutes.

...I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF WRITING A SCRIPT, YOU KNOW.

I GUESS KOBAMSHA'S MANUSCRIPT RATE IS HIGHER THAN PORN MAGS, HUH?

WELL, THE AWARD WORK WILL BE PUBLISHED IMMEDIATELY, AND THE PRIZE MONEY'S HUGE, SO I WON'T COMPLAIN.

BUT IF I DROP THAT PEN-NAME, THEN I'LL GO BACK TO BEING PAID AS AN AMATEUR.

MY RATE HAS INCREASED OVER THE YEARS,

YOOO! TREAT ME TO *FUGU,** WILL YA?

TEN MILLION?!

WHY SHOULD I...?

JUST SO WE'RE CLEAR, THIS IS ALL *IF* I WIN THE CONTEST.

*PUFFERFISH, A PRICEY BUT VENOMOUS DELICACY.

TEN MILLION YEN*.

HOW MUCH ARE WE TALKING?

*ABOUT ¢100,000.

...BUT CONSIDERING MY AGE, MY CHANCES ARE PROBABLY LESS THAN 10%.

OR SO I'D LIKE TO THINK...

IF EVERYTHING FOLLOWS PREVIOUS YEARS, FIVE CONTESTANTS WILL MAKE IT PAST THE THIRD ROUND,

MEANING I'VE GOT A 20% CHANCE OF WINNING.

NAH...

I THINK YOU HAVE A GOOD CHANCE, KUREKO-SAN.

DAMN... I'M NOT MAKING ANY PROGRESS (GRIPE).

...

I READ THE NOVEL YOU GAVE ME.

IT MADE ME REALIZE JUST HOW MUCH WRITING THE SCRIPTS FOR MY SHOW IS A SIDE JOB FOR YOU.

AND I READ LIKE 30 BOOKS PER YEAR. I'VE GOTTA BE RIGHT.

YOU CAN TRUST ME— YOU KNOW I DON'T WANT TO FLATTER YOU...

REALLY. I'M NOT BROWN-NOSING.

HUH?

YOU KNOW 30 ISN'T *THAT* IMPRESSIVE A NUMBER, RIGHT...?

WELL, WHAT-EVER. IT'S FINE.

I HAVE NO COMEBACK FOR THAT.

AND ISN'T IT ON THE PERSON-ALITY TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO FILL IN THE BLANKS?

...WHAT?

FOR STARTERS, MATO SPECIF-ICALLY TOLD ME TO LEAVE THE SCRIPTS ROUGH.

WELL, YEAH. OF COURSE WRITING THAT'S BEEN POLISHED FOR PUBLISH-ING AND WRITING THAT'S DONE AN HOUR IN ADVANCE AT MOST ARE GONNA BE DIFFERENT.

DON'T YOU FEEL GUILTY AT ALL FOR MAKING MIZUHO SAD?

SHE JOINED MOIWAYAMA RADIO BECAUSE **YOU'RE** HERE.

REAL TALK, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT MIZUHO?

WOULD YOU AT LEAST SLEEP WITH HER ONCE?

OR WHAT, ARE YOU AND MADOKA CHISHIRO AN ITEM OR SOMETHING?

WHO MADE THE FIRST MOVE?

HERE.

Take it.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR OTHER WORKS UNDER THE NAME HISAKI KURE?

MINARE-SAN...

UMM...

My Step-mother, the Minister of Defense

Hisaki Kure

ESP BOOKS

OH, MIZUHO!

GOOD TIMING.

DRAG HER OFF SOMEWHERE, WILL YA?

YOU SHOULDN'T TALK TO A WRITER WHILE THEY'RE WORKING ON A SCRIPT.

NAH, I'M OFF FROM THE STORE TODAY, SO I JUST STOPPED BY ON MY WAY TO THE THEATERS.

OR WAIT, WAS THE MEETING TODAY?

WANT TO GO OUT FOR LUNCH?

FWUMP

NOW, NOW, NOW...

?

WELL, THEN. TOODLE-OO.

LET'S DO LUNCH ANOTHER TIME. THE MOVIE'S GONNA START SOON.

KEEP AN EYE ON KUREKO-SAN FOR ME, OKAY?

HUH?! WAIT!

SHH.

KOMOTO-SAN... DO YOU NEED SOME-THING FROM MIZUHO?

!

YOU LIVE TOGETHER, RIGHT?

CAN YOU TRY TO CHEER UP NANBA?

I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK.

FOR A BOTTLE OF ACEROLA JUICE?

FOR ME?

YOU DO?

YEAH, I GUESS I SHOULD'VE EXPECTED THAT FROM YOU. MY BAD.

HM... I SEE.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME. I'M TRYING MY BEST TO EVERY DAY AS IT IS.

SIIIIGH. KOMOTO-SAN...

IT MAKES IT SEEM LIKE SHE'S FORCING HERSELF...

WHAT, IS MIZUHO THAT DE-PRESSED AT WORK, TOO?

ACTUALLY, SHE'S BEEN EVEN MORE ON-THE-BALL THAN USUAL.

I HEAR YOU USED TO GIVE HER A LIFT HOME ON YOUR MOTOR-CYCLE A LOT.

BY THE WAY...

ACTUAL-LY, A LOT HAPPENED AND...

DO STUFF LIKE THAT FOR HER MORE, WILL YOU?

PAT PAT PAT

MIZUHO'S LIKE THIS BECAUSE YOU COULDN'T MAN UP!

STEAL HER? I DON'T THINK THAT HAS ANY-THING TO DO WITH IT...

HOW'D A HANDSOME OUTDOORSY GUY LIKE YOU LET A FRUMPY OLD SMUT WRITER STEAL HER FROM UNDER YOUR NOSE?

HEY! WILL YOU KEEP IT DOWN?!

THE SAME DAY I WENT TO WORK WITH THE HOUSE KEY?!

...AND NOW SHE WON'T RIDE YOUR MOTORCYCLE ANYMORE?!

SHE DODGED YOU WHEN YOU TRIED TO KISS HER AT A SHRINE ON THE WAY HOME ONE NIGHT...

WHAT IS THIS CHICK'S DEAL?

I'M SO GLAD I CAME IN TODAY!

BUT THEN... THIS IS EXACTLY THE KIND OF STORY I WANTED TO HEAR.

AND AFTER I GAVE YOU A CHANCE TO MAKE A MOVE!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING, DUMMY?!

I shouldn't have stopped her!

PHEW...

I'VE BEEN THINKING OF MATERIAL FOR A NEW BOOK...

...IF I WIN THE AWARD.

SO, FOR KOBAMSHA ...

Y-YES?!

WELL, IT'S SET IN HOK-KAIDO...

WHAT SORT OF BOOK?

...IN A GHOST TOWN, WHERE A REPORTER IS INVESTI-GATING A CERTAIN INCIDENT THAT OC-CURRED THERE.

LET'S CALL HIM A.

I WANT TO FORMAT THE STORY AS TOLD THROUGH REPORTS WRITTEN BY A,

BUT TOWARDS THE END OF THE BOOK...

...JUST HEAR-ING THAT SPOOKED ME.

THIS DIRECTION ISN'T ACTUALLY ALL THAT UNCOMMON.

...IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT THE LATTER HALF OF THESE REPORTS WERE WRITTEN BY SOMEONE POSING AS A.

THE REAL A DISAP-PEARED MIDWAY THROUGH THE STORY.

...I CAN USE THE MATERIAL FOR A NEW SUBMIS-SION.

WELL, EVEN IF I DON'T WIN THIS TIME...

BUT I MIGHT NOT HAVE TIME TO GATHER MATERIAL IF I WAIT UNTIL AFTER THE AWARD'S BEEN GIVEN.

I KNOW IT SEEMS LIKE I'M GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF,

...AND MAKE IT AS REAL-ISTIC AS POSSIBLE.

THE TOWN THE STORY'S SET IN IS FICTITIOUS,

BUT I WANT TO GATHER REFERENCE ON AN ACTUAL TOWN TO MODEL IT ON...

IF I WANT TO HIRE A GUIDE, OR RATHER, A LOCAL TO SHOW ME AROUND...

EVEN THOUGH THE PLACE IN QUES-TION ISN'T A TOURISM SPOT,

SO, LET ME ASK YOU SOME-THING, NAN-BA.

HUH?! WH-WHAT IS IT?

BUT IN ALL MY YEARS, I'VE NEVER GONE ON A REAL TRIP FOR GATHERING MATERIAL, SO I'M SORT OF LOST...

IT'S EMBAR-RASSING TO ADMIT...

...WHERE DO YOU THINK I SHOULD LOOK TO FIND SOMEONE LIKE THAT?

... EVEN IF IT'S NOT A KNOWN TOURISM SPOT, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ASK THE TOURISM CENTER AT THE DISTRICT'S MUNICIPAL BUILDING FOR...

OH... IN THAT CASE...

IS IT OKAY IF I TAKE CARE OF GATHERING THAT MATERIAL?

KUREKO-SAN.

THAT'S FINE. I'LL MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T GET IN THE WAY OF WORK.

HUH? NO, NO...

I CAN'T ASK YOU TO DO THAT. IT'S NOT EVEN WORK-RELATED.

RIGHT NOW...

...I WANT TO DO ANYTHING I CAN TO HELP YOU, KUREKO-SAN.

wave

LISTEN TO ME!

AFTERWORD

Hello, everyone. What did you think of volume 4 of *Wave, Listen to Me!*—a dreamland of curry and radio, featuring a drunk woman whining about her life as the sun sets? This is, as you know, a manga whose author has been eternally drooling, mouth half-agape, over the prospect of making this into a romantic story, but now that we're at volume 4, I think we're starting to kind of see an atmosphere like that, finally—more or less. Not the protagonist, but still. The town of Kushiro gets namechecked a lot in this volume, but there's actually a lot of people in my life who were born there. Y-da-san, my first editor when I made my manga debut, and Yukari Takinami-san, an artist whom I may as well call the official supervisor of *Wave, Listen to Me!*, are two of them. That's why I wanted to give Kushiro a ton of good press when it came time to cover it in the story...but plans tend to go awry in many ways. Also, if you look at online reviews of Seicomart, the conventional wisdom for their food seems to be "the Hot Chef brand is awesome, everything else is sh*t," but to tell the truth, I've only gotten to shop there one time. Research trips for my work are generally two-night journeys, and for some reason, neither me nor my editor tend to suggest we have one of our meals at a convenience store when we go. Well, the reason's pretty obvious, I guess—but still, I wish I had a chance to just go up to Hokkaido and chill out for like half a month or so. Anyway, see you later. **—Hiroaki Samura**

"Have a seat," said my stepmother, pointing to the white loveseat she'd allegedly purchased off of Karimoku the month prior, before removing her jacket and tossing it vaguely threateningly onto the dining chair to her side.

She then opened the refrigerator door and retrieved a two-liter bottle of mineral water from the drink rack inside, twisted off the cap, and began to drink from it audibly on the spot.

Staring at the silhouette of her ample breasts displayed daringly through her violet sweater, I sat back onto the sofa with mild apprehension, grabbed the Eastern-Europe themed pillow sitting beside me and placed it on my lap. Still clutching the bottle, my stepmother walked across the room with a sliding stride and free-fell bottom-first onto the couch to my left, spattering a few droplets on her smooth, nylon-wrapped knee.

She proceeded to place the bottle on my left knee as if urging me to partake.

"So... about the letter you mentioned," I said, broaching the subject of our taxi-ride discussion once more and took the water bottle in hand—oddly cold to the touch, considering how short the AC had been running.

"From the Chief Cabinet Secretary? You're actually curious about that?" she replied quizzically.

"Well, certain—Sure, why wouldn't I be?" I said, catching myself mid-sentence.

My stepmother turned to face me, her cheeks flushed from an evening's worth of cocktails, and stared at me in silent admonishment for having slipped into my old habit of speaking as a proper congressional secretary in her presence.

Though perhaps due to the alcohol coursing through her veins, her eyes lacked their usual luster, replaced instead with a fervor unlike anything I'd seen from her before. She slowly allowed her body to lean against mine, removing her glasses and folding them with one hand, and tilted her head to rest a cheek on my shoulder.

"...I mean, it was from when I was first elected, and that was over a decade ago. I don't really see the point of only explaining that part of it, but if you really want to know, I'll tell you."

Feeling the full weight and warmth of my stepmother's body through my left arm, paired with the realization that they belonged to a woman only four years my senior, immediately turned my throat as dry as the Sahara Dessert. I drew the lipstick-smeared mouth of the bottle to my lips and threw back a third of the remaining water in a single gulp.

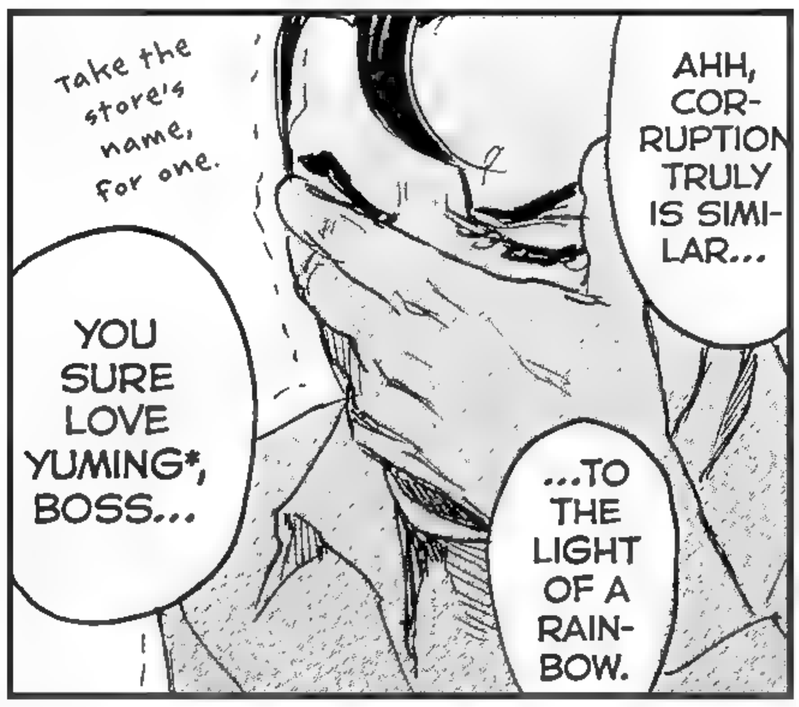
Then followed an awkward silence that spanned an eternity, or so it seemed anyway. In truth, it couldn't have lasted for even two minutes. Checking to see if she'd dozed off, I placed my hand on her thigh and lightly squeezed the supple flesh...an act I'd never done once since we began living together, let alone the time I spent working under her.

While I predicted that she would slap my hand away should she be awake, such a sensation never came. Rather, she lazily placed her hand on mine and, much to my surprise, slowly guided it into the slight crevice formed by her legs. Sitting there frozen with my hand clasped between her thighs, yet another three minutes passed in silence. Despite the still-chilly atmosphere of the room, I felt my left fingertips begin to sweat and tingle from the warmth, unsure if it was hers or my own.

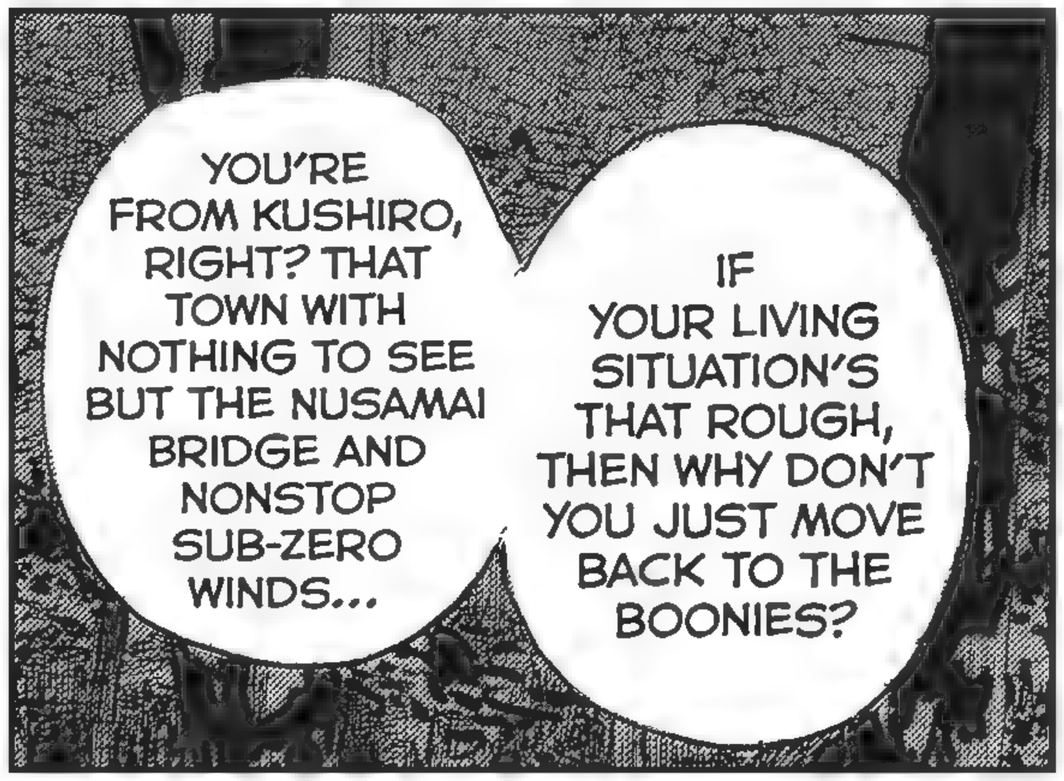
Just then, I heard my stepmother part her lips and say, "He blackmailed me. Suga-san, that is. Back when he was still the Prime Minister."

Translation Notes

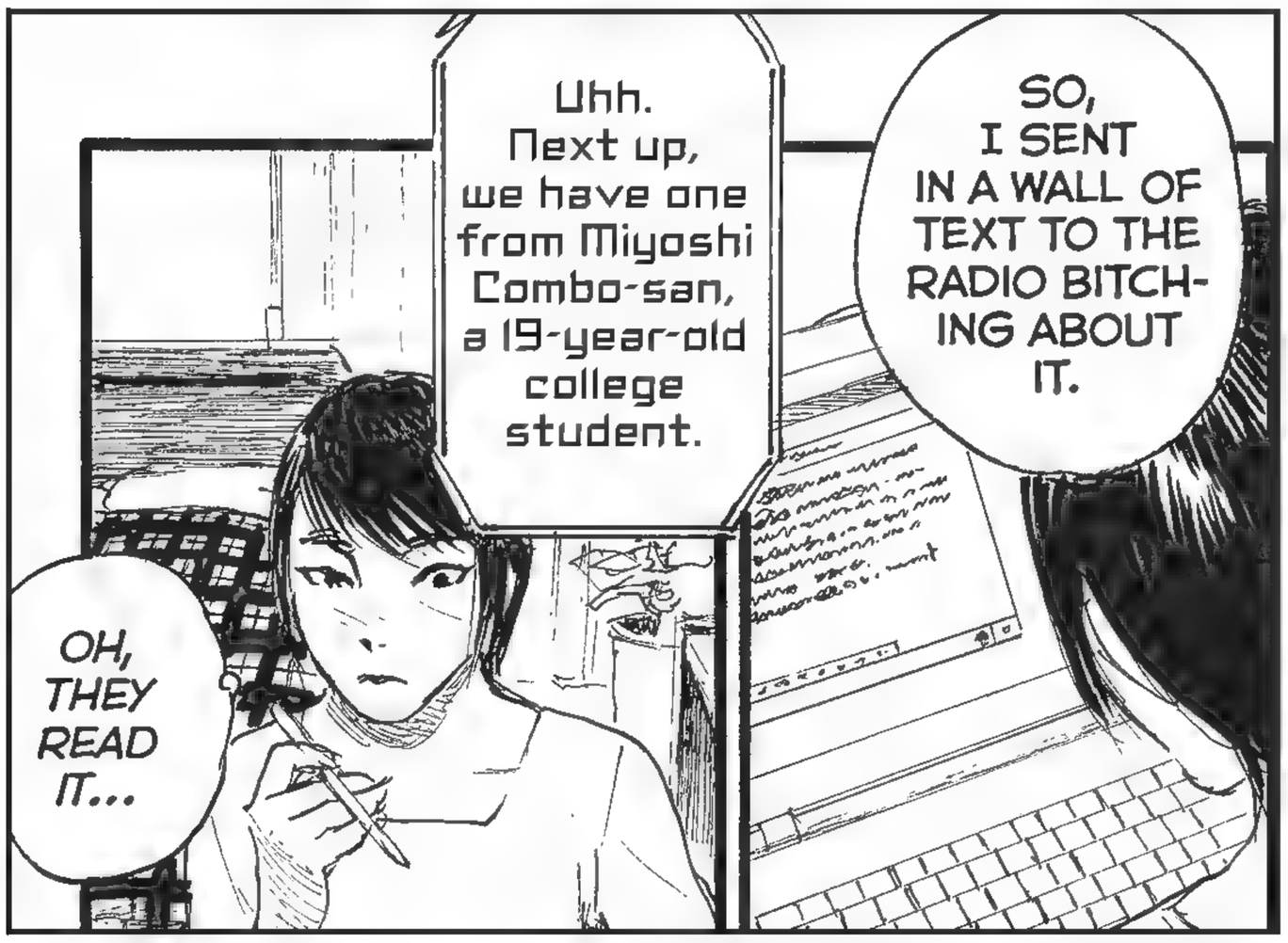
Yumi Matsutoya lyrics, page 22
Takarada appears to be such a big fan of music artist Yumi Matsutoya that his dialogue in this panel is paraphrasing the lyrics from her song *LATE SUMMER LAKE.* Similarly, as Nakahara suggests, the restaurant name VOYAGER could be a homage to Matsutoya's album and/or single of the same name.



Nusamai Bridge, page 30
A European-style bridge that spans across the Kushiro River to connect the northern and southern sections of the city. There are four (naked) bronze statues along the path, meant to represent each of the four seasons. It is one of the three most famous bridges in Hokkaido, along with Sapporo's Toyohira Bridge and Asahikawa's Asahi Bridge.



Miyoshi Combo, page 33
A set meal from the curry restaurant chain Miyoshi, popular in Sapporo. Minare walks by one in volume 1.

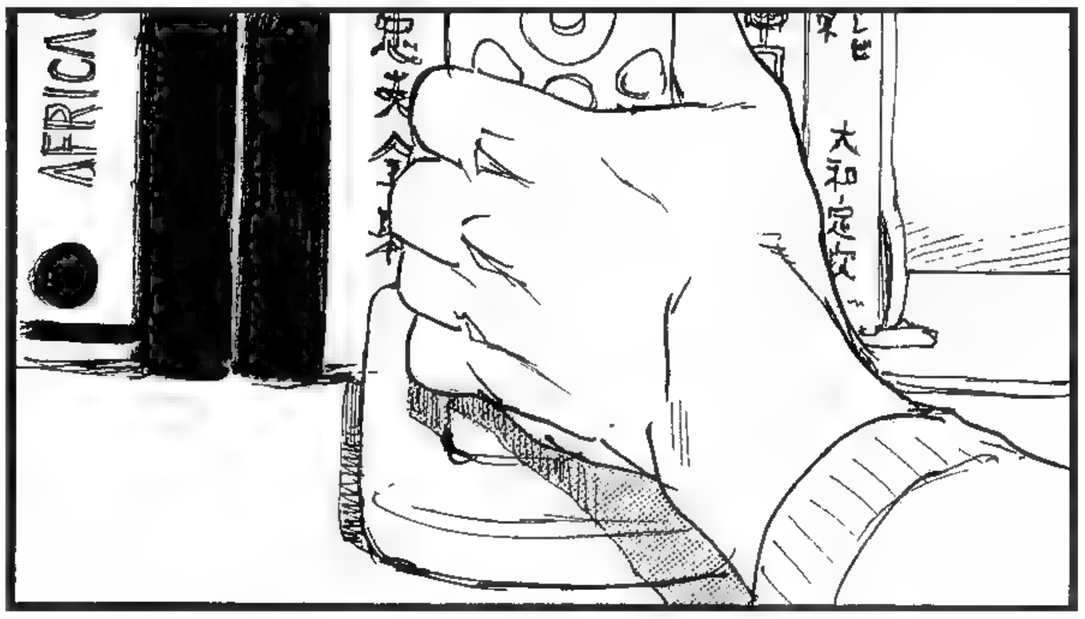


Mount Ichankoppe, page 41
This ridge bears an Ainu name meaning "salmon spawning ground river," and sports one of the best views of Lake Shikotsu. As the reader may recall from volume 3, Lake Shikotsu is a popular ghost spot.

Marriage hunting parties, page 47
Marriage hunting, or *konkatsu,* refers to one's active pursuit of a spouse much in the same way "job hunting" refers to seeking employment. In Japan, traditional matchmaking, or *omiai,* usually brings the families of potential spouses together because the parents figure largely into the overall process. In the case of modern marriage hunting, which often involves parties at upscale venues with marriageable singles, there's more freedom among participants to pursue or give up on prospects, but the main idea is still that if you're attending, you're in it to get hitched.

Badger Taiji and *The No Badger-Hunting Hour*, page 41
This comedy duo name and radio show title appear to be a contradicting play on words. The "Taiji" in the duo's name "Badger Taiji" is the combination of their individual stage names, borrowing the "Tai" in "Taizo" and the "Ji" in "Jiro." This *taiji* is homophonous with the Japanese word meaning "extermination," so it's as if their radio show title is ironically meant to exclude them for an hour.

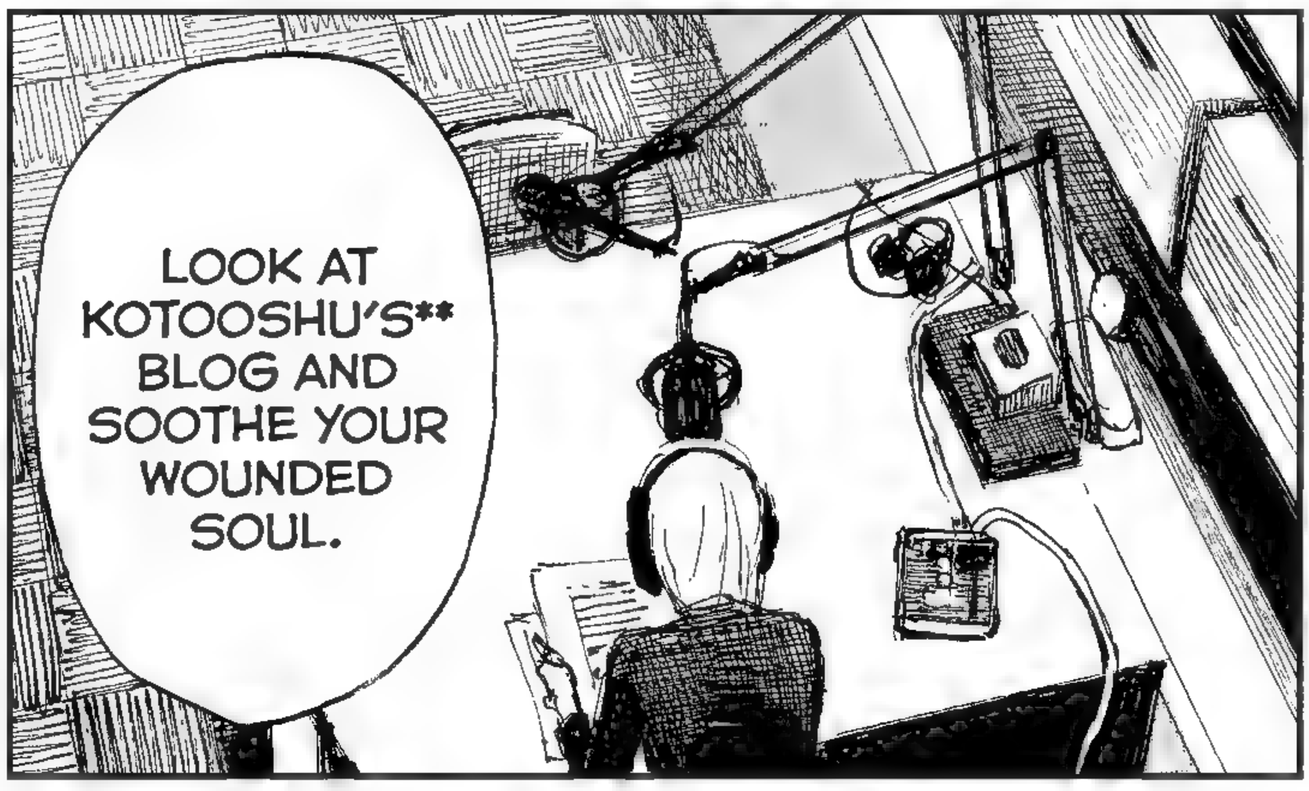
Kureko's books, page 77
The rightmost book lists Sadaji Yamato as the author, a sound effects veteran with decades of experience in both television and radio. His biography published in 2001 details his life experiences, including as chief sound effects director at NHK, Japan's national broadcasting organization. Additionally, the obscured book to the left of Kureko's hand looks to be a work from Tadao Chigusa, an older smut author who passed away in 1995.



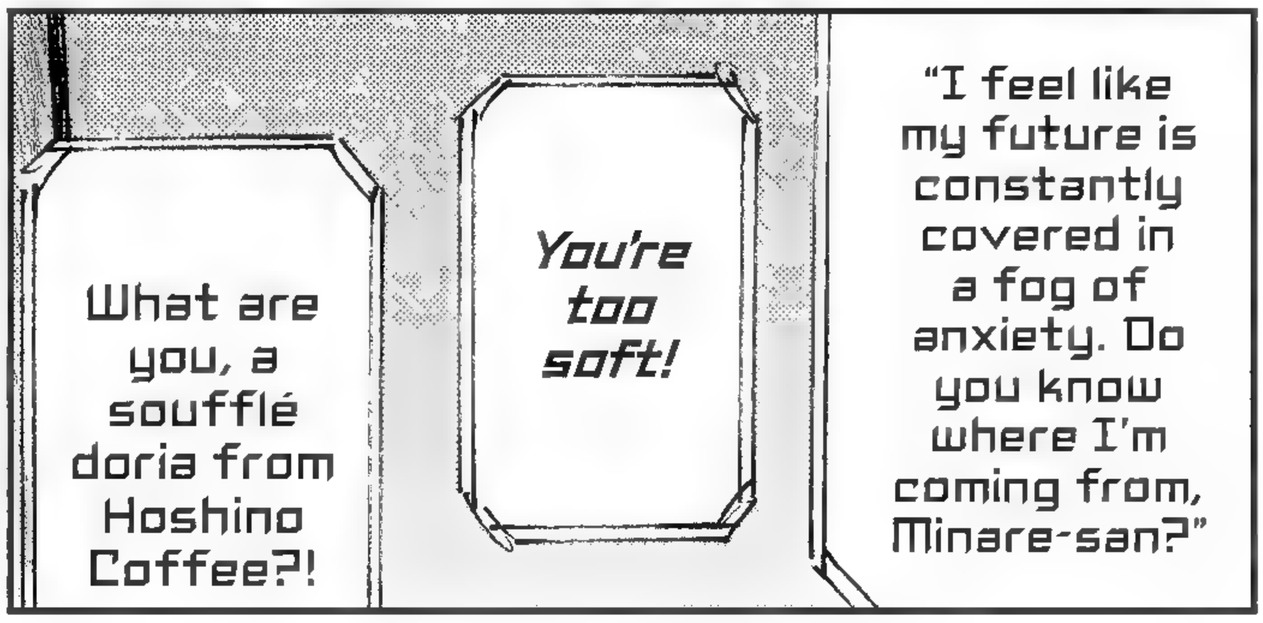
General-interest magazines, page 81
The rack in this panel features various magazines that borrow the aesthetic of real-life publications, but of course with slightly altered names. Of note, the magazine that catches Minare's father's eye, "Neoteric Weekly" (*Shuukan kindai*) is based on the magazine "Modern Weekly" (*Shuukan gendai*), which, like many publications in this genre, runs the gamut of celebrity news to politics when it comes to content.

Arakawa Ranzou Award, page 93
A fictionalized name of the *Edogawa Rampo Prize* given every year by the Mystery Writers of Japan. The real prize is named for a novelist instrumental in the development of Japanese mystery fiction writing, who lived during the mid-to late-1900s. Much like with the Arakawa award in this series, the winner of the Edogawa prize has their mystery novel published and receives 10,000,000 yen (about $100,000) in prize money.

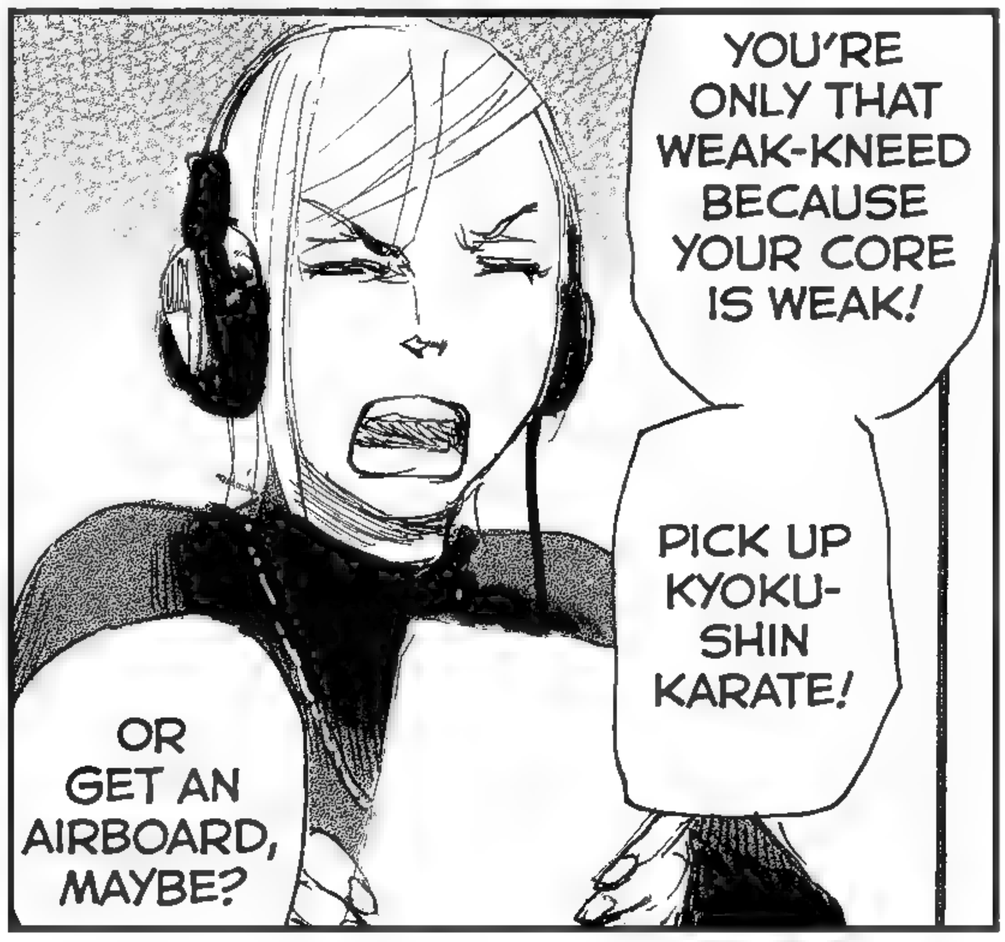
Kotooshu's blog, page 103
Katsunori Kotooshu was the professional name of Kaloyan Stefanov Mahlyanov, a former professional sumo wrestler of Bulgarian descent. He rose to *ozeki,* the second-highest rank in sumo, in the early 2000s, but retired without achieving the top designation of *yokozuna,* and now trains up-and-coming sumo wrestlers. His blog mainly consists of photos of food, daily life, and his students, all with minimal captions.



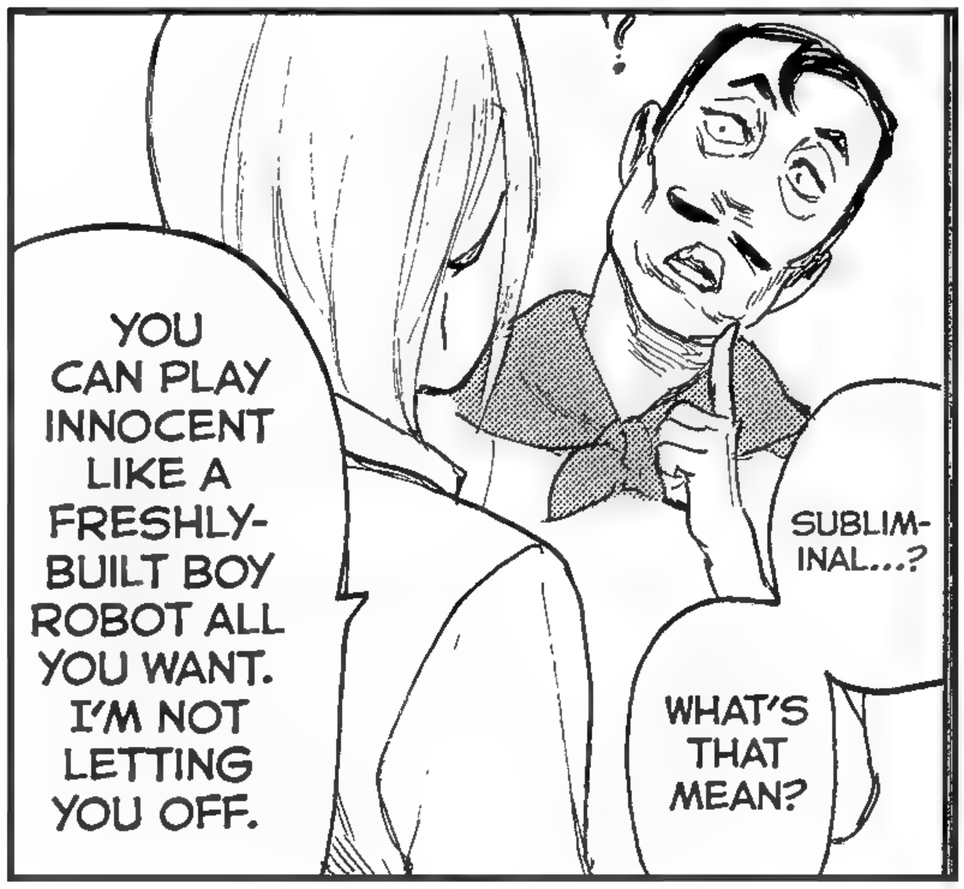
Soufflé doria, page 104
Hoshino Coffee is a hand-drip coffee chain with locations throughout Japan and in select Asian countries. Doria is a common Western-style dish in Japan best equated to rice gratin, and the soufflé twist Hoshino adds to it is a whipped egg on top that's so fluffy, it's practically overflowing from the bowl the doria is served in.



Kyokushin karate, page 105
One of the 8 main styles of karate, Kyokushin features more full-contact, knockdown sparring as compared with other styles.

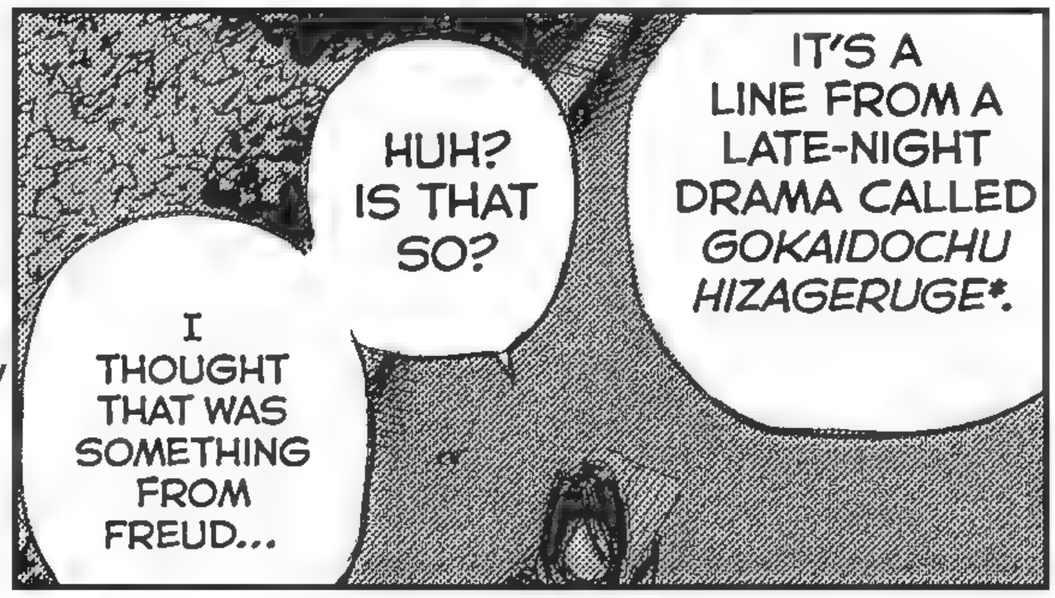


Boy robot, page 123
A reference to the titular character in Osamu Tezuka's classic manga series *Astro Boy* (*Tetsuwan Atomu*), in which a scientist creates an android boy to replace his late son. When Astro Boy first awakens, he needs to be taught language and manners, much like any human child.

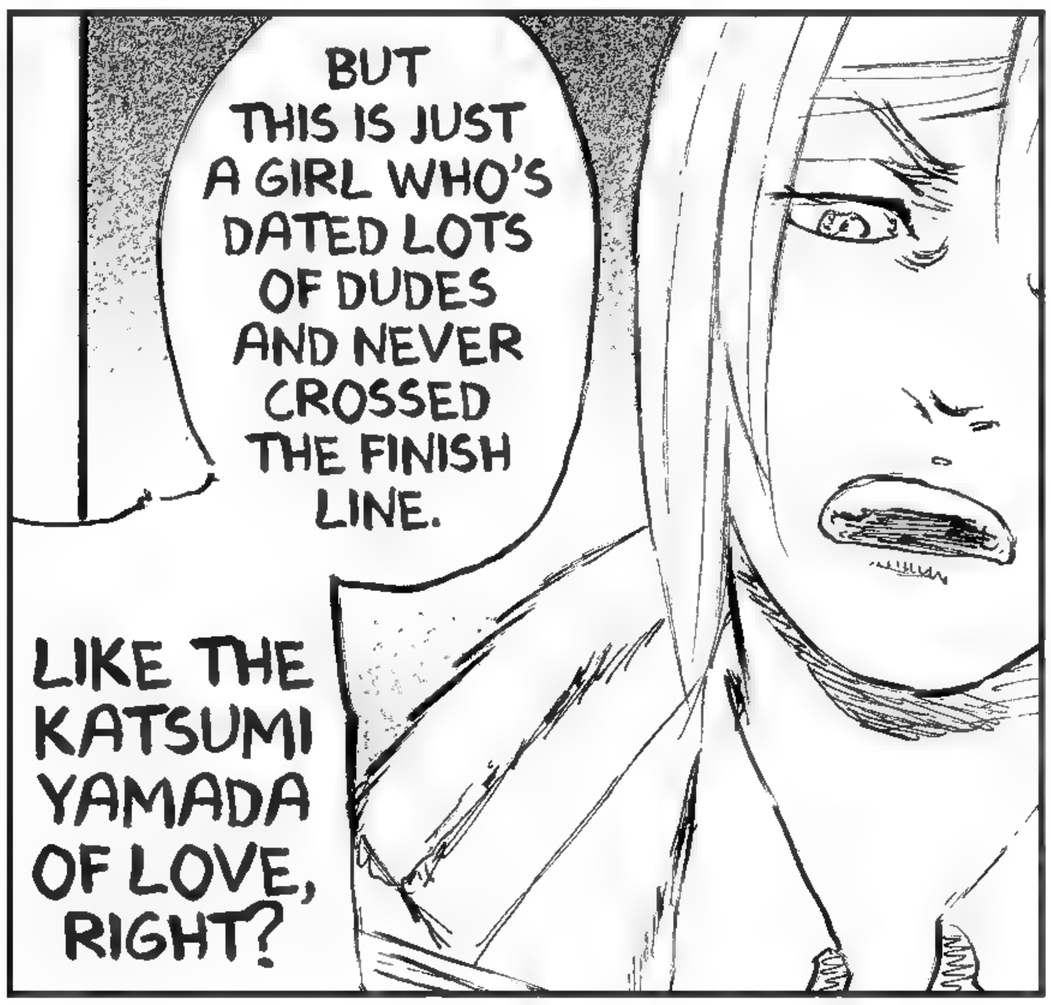


Keigo Nishino, Natsuo Kirino, and Jun Idobashi, page 128
These are all fictionalized names of real mystery authors who also won the *Edogawa Rampo Prize.* The actual author names are Keigo Higashino, Natsuo Kirino (takes a different spelling in Japanese), and Jun Ikeido respectively.

***Gokaidochu Hizakeruge*, page 181**
A parody of the comic novel *Tokaidochu Hizakurige*, known in translation as *Shank's Mare*. The original novel was published in the Edo period (1603-1868) and documented the misadventures of two travelers on the road from Edo (now Tokyo) to Kyoto. The story is told in the fashion of a travel guide written through the lens of supposedly "cultured" Edo men who often found themselves in hilarious situations whilst traveling among country bumpkins.



Katsumi Yamada, page 189
An athlete and veteran competitor on the TV show SASUKE (also known as *American Ninja Warrior*).



PERFECT WORLD

Rie Aruga

An office party reunites Tsugumi with her high school crush Itsuki. He's realized his dream of becoming an architect, but along the way, he experienced a spinal injury that put him in a wheelchair. Now Tsugumi's rekindled feelings will butt up against prejudices she never considered — and Itsuki will have to decide if he's ready to let someone into his heart...

"Depicts with great delicacy and courage the difficulties some with disabilities experience getting involved in romantic relationships... Rie Aruga refuses to romanticize, pushing her heroine to face the reality of disability. She invites her readers to the same tasks of empathy, knowledge and recognition."
—Slate.fr

"An important entry [in manga romance]... The emotional core of both plot and characters indicates thoughtfulness... [Aruga's] research is readily apparent in the text and artwork, making this feel like a real story."
—Anime News Network

KC KODANSHA COMICS

Perfect World © Rie Aruga/Kodansha Ltd.

Knight of the Ice ©Yayoi Ogawa/Kodansha Ltd.

SKATING THRILLS AND ICY CHILLS WITH THIS NEW TINGLY ROMANCE SERIES!

A rom-com on ice, perfect for fans of *Princess Jellyfish* and *Wotakoi*. Kokoro is the talk of the figure-skating world, winning trophies and hearts. But little do they know... he's actually a huge nerd! From the beloved creator of *You're My Pet* (*Tramps Like Us*).

Chitose is a serious young woman, working for the health magazine *SASSO*. Or at least, she would be, if she wasn't constantly getting distracted by her childhood friend, international figure skating star Kokoro Kijinami! In the public eye and on the ice, Kokoro is a gallant, flawless knight, but behind his glittery costumes and breathtaking spins lies a secret: He's actually a hopelessly romantic otaku, who can only land his quad jumps when Chitose is on hand to recite a spell from his favorite magical girl anime!

KC KODANSHA COMICS

CUTE ANIMALS AND LIFE LESSONS, PERFECT FOR ASPIRING PET VETS OF ALL AGES!

Yuzu the Pet Vet 1 Mingo Ito / NIPPON COLUMBIA CO., LTD. · Kodansha Ltd.

KC KODANSHA COMICS

For an 11-year-old, Yuzu has a lot on her plate. When her mom gets sick and has to be hospitalized, Yuzu goes to live with her uncle who runs the local veterinary clinic. Yuzu's always been scared of animals, but she tries to help out. Through all the tough moments in her life, Yuzu realizes that she can help make things all right with a little help from her animal pals, peers, and kind grown-ups.

Every new patient is a furry friend in the making!

The adorable new odd-couple cat comedy manga from the creator of the beloved *Chi's Sweet Home*, in full color!

Praise for *Chi's Sweet Home*

"Nearly impossible to turn away... a true all-ages title that anyone, young or old, cat lover or not, will enjoy. The stories will bring a smile to your face and warm your heart."

—School Library Journal

Sue & Tai-chan

Konami Kanata

Sue is an aging housecat who's looking forward to living out her life in peace... but her plans change when the mischievous black tomcat Tai-chan enters the picture! Hey! Sue never signed up to be a catsitter! *Sue & Tai-chan* is the latest from the reigning meow-narch of cute kitty comics, Konami Kanata.

Sue & Tai-chan © Konami Kanata/Kodansha Ltd.

KC KODANSHA COMICS

A SMART, NEW ROMANTIC COMEDY FOR FANS OF *SHORTCAKE CAKE* AND *TERRACE HOUSE*!

Living Room Matsunaga san © Keiko Iwashita / Kodansha Ltd

KC KODANSHA COMICS

A romance manga starring high school girl Meeko, who learns to live on her own in a boarding house whose living room is home to the odd (but handsome) Matsunaga-san. She begins to adjust to her new life away from her parents, but Meeko soon learns that no matter how far away from home she is, she's still a young girl at heart — especially when she finds herself falling for Matsunaga-san.

Something's Wrong With Us

NATSUMI ANDO

The dark, psychological, sexy shojo series readers have been waiting for!

A spine-chilling and steamy romance between a Japanese sweets maker and the man who framed her mother for murder!

Following in her mother's footsteps, Nao became a traditional Japanese sweets maker, and with unparalleled artistry and a bright attitude, she gets an offer to work at a world-class confectionary company. But when she meets the young, handsome owner, she recognizes his cold stare...

ng With Us © Natsumi Ando / Kodansha Ltd.

KC KODANSHA COMICS

The boys are back, in 400-page hardcovers that are as pretty and badass as they are!

Saiyuki © Kazuya Minakura / Ichijinsha Inc.

KC KODANSHA COMICS

"AN EDGY COMIC LOOK AT AN ANCIENT CHINESE TALE." —YALSA

Genjo Sanzo is a Buddhist priest in the city of Togenkyo, which is being ravaged by yokai spirits that have fallen out of balance with the natural order. His superiors send him on a journey far to the west to discover why this is happening and how to stop it. His companions are three yokai with human souls. But this is no day trip — the four will encounter many discoveries and horrors on the way.

FEATURES NEW TRANSLATION, COLOR PAGES, AND BEAUTIFUL WRAPAROUND COVER ART!

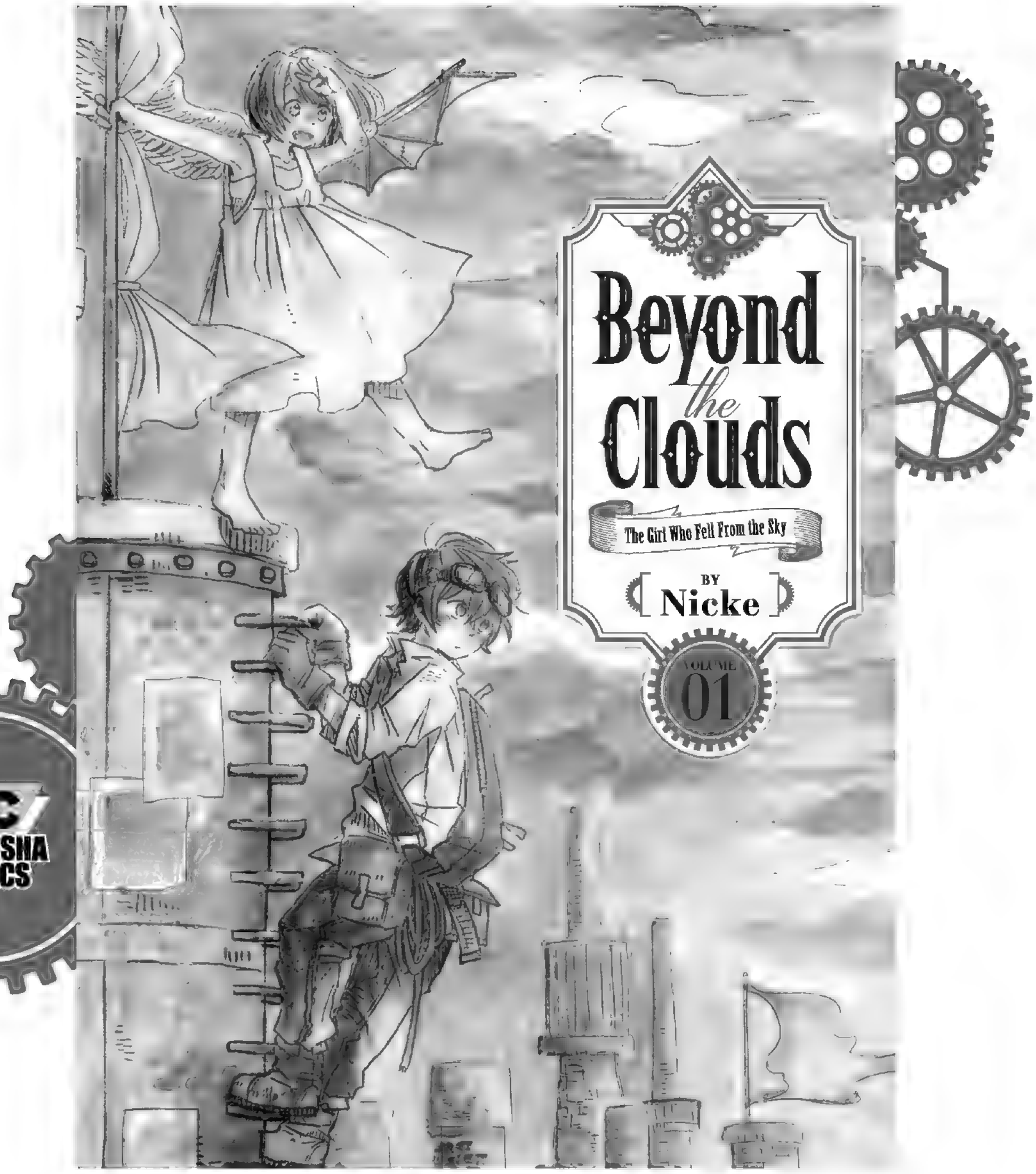
THE SWEET SCENT OF LOVE IS IN THE AIR! FOR FANS OF OFFBEAT ROMANCES LIKE WOTAKOI

Sweat and Soap © Kintetsu Yamada / Kodansha Ltd.

In an office romance, there's a fine line between sexy and awkward... and that line is where Asako — a woman who sweats copiously — meets Koutarou — a perfume developer who can't get enough of Asako's, er, scent. Don't miss a romcom manga like no other!

KC KODANSHA COMICS

Young characters and steampunk setting, like *Howl's Moving Castle* and *Battle Angel Alita*



Beyond the Clouds © 2018 Nicke / Ki-oon

A boy with a talent for machines and a mysterious girl whose wings he's fixed will take you beyond the clouds! In the tradition of the high-flying, resonant adventure stories of Studio Ghibli comes a gorgeous tale about the longing of young hearts for adventure and friendship!

KAMOME SHIRAHAMA

Witch Hat Atelier

A magical manga adventure for fans of Disney and Studio Ghibli!

Witch Hat Atelier © Kamome Shirahama/Kodansha Ltd

The magical adventure that took Japan by storm is finally here, from acclaimed DC and Marvel cover artist Kamome Shirahama!

In a world where everyone takes wonders like magic spells and dragons for granted, Coco is a girl with a simple dream: She wants to be a witch. But everybody knows magicians are born, not made, and Coco was not born with a gift for magic. Resigned to her un-magical life, Coco is about to give up on her dream to become a witch…until the day she meets Qifrey, a mysterious, traveling magician. After secretly seeing Qifrey perform magic in a way she's never seen before, Coco soon learns what everybody "knows" might not be the truth, and discovers that her magical dream may not be as far away as it may seem…

KC KODANSHA COMICS

A dark and sexy body-horror action manga perfect for fans of *Prison School* and *High School of the Dead*!

Shuichi Kagaya is a smart kid, and most smart kids his age would be thinking about college. Shuichi is also a monster, and he's smart enough to know that monsters don't go to college. But after he uses his monstrous form to save his classmate Claire Aoki, it doesn't matter what his plans for the future were, because he's not the one making the decisions anymore. Now that the seductive, sadistic Claire knows Shuichi's secret, she's got her own ideas about what a monster is good for—because he's not the first monster she's met...

KC KODANSHA COMICS

GLEIPNIR

Gleipnir © Sun Takeda/Kodansha Ltd.

"You and me together...we would be unstoppable."

SAINT YOUNG MEN

A LONG AWAITED ARRIVAL IN PREMIUM 2-IN-1 HARDCOVER

After centuries of hard work, Jesus and Buddha take a break from their heavenly duties to relax among the people of Japan, and their adventures in this lighthearted buddy comedy are sure to bring mirth and merriment to all!

KC KODANSHA COMICS

"Brilliant…the physical comedy and facial expressions will make you literally LOL."

—Sam Humphries
(host of *DC Daily*;
writer, *Green Lanterns,*
Legendary Star-Lord)

Saint Young Men © Hikaru Nakamura/Kodansha Ltd.

Wave, Listen to Me! 4

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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Chapter 32 "I DON'T WANNA GO WITH YOU."

The time is now one o'clock.

IT'S ABOUT THAT TIME. AS I MENTIONED AT THE START OF THE SHOW...

ALL RIGHT!

YOU'RE LISTENING TO MADOKA CHISHIRO'S *SEPTEMBER BLUE MOON.*

HEY. HIJIRI YAMIKOJI HERE.

EMPEROR COWPER HIMSELF, HIJIRI YAMIKOJI-SAN!

JOINING ME IN THE BOOTH NOW IS MY OH-SO-WONDERFUL GUEST,

OOP! *HA HA HA.* IT IS, ACTUALLY...

IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY TODAY, ISN'T IT, YAMIKOJI-SAN?

WHEEEW. IT'S A FULL, BRIGHT BLUE CAKE, LADIES AND GENTS. I'VE ONLY SEEN CAKES LIKE THESE ON AMERICAN TV.

HUH?! SERIOUSLY?

OH, WOW. YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE.

THE COLOR IS, I GUESS YOU COULD SAY, VERY *AMERICAN*.

AS SUCH, WE'VE PREPARED A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR YOU TO CELEBRATE.

HEY, WAIT... MATO-SAN!

WOW, REALLY?

Happy Birthday

TURNS OUT WE'RE THE SAME AGE, MADOKA-SAN.

Y'KNOW, I ACTUALLY ASKED THE DIRECTOR EARLIER.

PFF HA HA HA!

SHOULD WE JUST KEEP IT A SECRET, THEN?

PEOPLE WILL FIND OUT HOW OLD I AM, TOO.

BUT FRANKLY, I DON'T WANT TO ANYMORE.

I WAS ABOUT TO ASK HOW OLD YOU ARE,

WELL, THE LISTENERS COULD JUST CHECK MY WIKI IF THEY WANTED TO FIND OUT, ANYWAY.

BA HA HA HA

IT'S FINE. NO SENSE HIDING IT AT THIS POINT.

35! I'M 35 YEARS OLD.

THOUGH I HAVE BEEN CALLED A HAG BY ONE OF THE YOUNGER DJS BEFORE.

WHY, THANK YOU.

I WILL SAY, YOU LOOK VERY YOUNG FOR YOUR AGE.

ON AIR

REC

*A LOW TABLE EQUIPPED WITH A HEATER AND BLANKET.

ABOUT AS LONG AS SARAH JESSIKA PARKER'S FACE!

MRS

I'LL GO AHEAD AND PRAY THAT YOU LIVE A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE.

IS COZYING UP UNDER THE *KOTATSU** MARATHONING *SEX AND THE CITY* THE ONLY WAY YOU KNOW HOW TO SPEND A DAY OFF?!

YO, HAG!

BUT I'VE NEVER ONCE THOUGHT THE SAME THING FOR MY DAD. HE'S THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WON'T DIE EVEN IF YOU KILL HIM...

Y'KNOW, I HOPE THAT MY MOM LIVES AN AVERAGELY LONG LIFE,

Wave, Listen to Me! #5
Speaker: Minare Koda
Life Counseling 2/4
° central ward: Toyohisa Kawata
Handle Name: Milky Adolescence
My mother is over 60, but her mind is still stuck in the bubble era. I definitely don't want to be nice to her, but I do want her to live long. Would you please convey these complicated feelings to her for me?

...THAT OUGHTA DO IT.

"WHEN I PROPOSED TO MY GIRLFRIEND, SHE RESPONDED WITH, '*KANIKUSO PORIPORI.*' WHAT EXACTLY DOES THAT MEAN?"

FROM BLAVATSKY OVER IN EAST WARD,

"PORIPORI" MEANS "TUBE."

LIBERALLY TRANSLATED, I RECKON IT MEANS, "YOU'RE STEPPING ON MY BLOOD TRANSFUSION TUBE." PROPOSING TO HER IN THE HOSPITAL ROOM SEEMS TO HAVE COMPLETELY BACKFIRED.

IN AMHARIC, "KANIKUSO" MEANS "TO TRAMPLE."

AHH... *KANIKUSO PORIPORI*, EH? IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, THAT'S THE ETHIOPIAN LANGUAGE OF AMHARIC.

"MINARE-SAN, AMONG ALL THE DYING MESSAGES YOU'VE SEEN, PLEASE TELL ME THE ONE WHICH LEFT THE BIGGEST IMPRESSION."

UHH. NEXT, FROM GOLDFISH GRAVEYARD IN IWAMI-ZAWA...

HM? WHAT'S UP?

UUUGH. I'M BEAT...

MATO-SAN, I HAVE A VERY PRESSING REQUEST TO MAKE.

HMM...

SINCE VOYAGER IS CLOSED ON WEDNES-DAYS.

WHAT WOULD HELP THE MOST IS IF WE COULD MOVE THE BROADCAST TO TUESDAY,

IT'S PRETTY ROUGH GOING TO BED AT FOUR IN THE MORNING ONLY TO MEET AT NINE. DOESN'T IT SUCK FOR YOU, TOO?

ABOUT OUR EVALUATION SESSIONS THE DAY AFTER SHOWS,

COULD WE MAYBE MOVE THEM TO TWO DAYS AFTER INSTEAD?

...WELL, I'M SURE WE CAN WORK SOMETHING OUT. WE'RE THE ONLY SHOW THAT USES THIS TIME SLOT, ANYWAY.

IT'S MUCH HARDER TO CHANGE THE BROADCAST DAY, THOUGH.

SURE, WE CAN MOVE THE MEETINGS BACK A DAY.

MY LIFESTYLE WILL TURN INTO A KASU SOBA FUDO* WORKER'S...

IF YOU'LL DO FIVE SHOWS A WEEK, MONDAY TO FRIDAY.

SURE THING.

ONE MORE THING,

PLEASE RAISE MY SALARY FIVE-FOLD.

*A JAPANESE PUB IN SAPPORO OPEN FROM 6:30 PM TO 7:00 AM.

HA HA. TRUE ENOUGH.

IF WE GO WITH HOT-JAZZY IMPROVISED PLANS EVERY SINGLE DAY, WE'LL BE AT THE END OF OUR ROPE AFTER TWO WEEKS.

AND WE SHOULD HAMMER OUT A CONSIS-TENT FORMAT BEFORE WE GO ADDING MORE SHOW DAYS.

A RADIO PERSONALITY WITH A LATE NIGHT 20-MINUTE TALK SHOW, HUH?

BUT, Y'KNOW...

IS IT REALLY LIKE YOU TO SETTLE FOR SOMETHING SO MODEST?

WHAT IS THIS, A PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR?

NISEU IN BIRATORI, A TOWN IN HIDAKA...

WELCOME HOME.

SORRY I LEFT BEFORE THE SHOW TO-NIGHT.

OOP. LOOK WHO'S HARD AT IT.

IT'S JUST *TENKASU*, EGG, AND CROWN DAISY,

BUT IT'S SO GOOD I FEEL LIKE MY HEAD MIGHT EXPLODE!

SO GOOD!

550 kcal (late night)

TO MAKE UP FOR IT, I MADE YOUR FAVORITE *TENKASU** AND CROWN DAISY RICE BOWL.

WOO-HOO! SERIOUSLY?

I'LL HEAT IT UP FOR YOU.

I'LL PROPOSE TO YOU BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

This world's tougher than that!

...SURE.

YOU COULD ALWAYS OPEN A SHOP SELLING THIS IF THE RADIO BUSINESS GOES UNDER.

*CRUNCHY FRIED BITS OF TEMPURA BATTER. ALSO KNOWN AS *AGEDAMA*.

what site are you lookin' at?

HM? AHH. YEAH.

NOW THAT I LOOK, HOKKAIDO REALLY DOES HAVE A LOT OF UNDER-POPULATED AREAS.

I LIVED IN A PRETTY URBAN AREA, SO I NEVER FELT LIKE IT WAS DESERTED.

Kushiro subprefecture
Shibecha
Tsurui
Shoro Dam
Lake Toro
Kushiro Plains
Lake Akkeshi
Akkeshi
Otanoshike
Kushiro
Kushiro
Okotsu
N
W
E
S

BUT TECHNICALLY ALMOST THE ENTIRE REGION IS CONSIDERED "UNDER-POPULATED."

...IS SUPPOS-EDLY THE FOURTH BIGGEST CITY IN HOKKAIDO.

MY HOME-TOWN OF KUSHIRO ...

HMM.

SO? WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT...?

FOR REAL? YOU CAN'T EVEN PLAY BASEBALL WITH THOSE NUMBERS.

THERE WERE ONLY 15 KIDS IN MY ENTIRE MIDDLE SCHOOL.

IT WAS MERGED WITH DATE BECAUSE IT COULDN'T MAINTAIN ITSELF ANYMORE.

YOU SAY THAT, BUT MY HOME VILLAGE OF OTAKI IS A GHOST TOWN.

HEY, NAKAHARA-KUN. WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

I LIVED IN THE NERIMA WARD OF TOKYO UNTIL I GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL.

ARE YOU DISSING THE BOONIES?

OR SO I SAY, BUT IT WAS REALLY CLOSER TO SAITAMA.

THERE WERE MORE UNMANNED PRODUCE STANDS THAN CONVENIENCE STORES. WHAT A JOKE, RIGHT?

...

I HAVE AN EVALUATION SESSION AT THE STATION TOMORROW, SO IS IT COOL IF I COME IN AN HOUR LATE?

HUH? NO ONE ASKED.

I'M FROM AOMORI.

I HAVEN'T BEEN BACK IN OVER 20 YEARS, THOUGH.

OH, YEAH. HEY, BOSS...

YOU BETTER NOT BE THINKING YOU CAN WALK AROUND LIKE YOU OWN THE PLACE DUE TO THE WHOLE SUBLIMINAL MESSAGE INCIDENT.

WAIT...

WELL, YEAH.

LISTEN, GIRLY.

AREN'T YOU GETTING A LITTLE CARRIED AWAY LATELY?

IF YOUR MEETING IS TOMORROW, THEN WHY WERE YOU TWO HOURS LATE TODAY?

HUH...? HANG ON.

OH...

I HAVEN'T GOTTEN TO TAKE IT EASY ON SUNDAY FOR A WHILE, SO I JUST KINDA OVER-SLEPT...

TWITCH

YOU MIGHT ALSO END UP GETTING SUED BY THE STATION IF THINGS GO WRONG.

I THINK YOU *COULD* TECHNICALLY CALL IT COERCION, BUT...

WELL...THE DEAL WAS TO PLAY THE AUDIO IN EXCHANGE FOR KEEPING YOUR JOB.

WHAT, NO DICE?

knowledge acquired from detective shows.

OHH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT! NO BIGGIE!

I HAVE A WORK MEETING I NEED TO ATTEND. I'M SORRY FOR THE INCONVE-NIENCE.

I'M SORRY TO ASK, BUT MAY I ALSO LEAVE AN HOUR EARLY TOMORROW?

UMM... EXCUSE ME, SIR.

A DREAMLAND OF BREAD AND CURRY. VOYAGER

VOYAGER

I PAY YOU GOOD MONEY.

TACHIBANA-SAN IS A VOLUNTEER.

GOOD ...?

I SENSE A DISCREPANCY IN YOUR TREATMENT OF ME VERSUS TACHIBANA-SAN.

WHOA, WHOA, TAKARADA-SAN.

O-OKAY.

BUT IF YOU COULD TELL YOUR BROTHER TO DROP BY FOR CURRY ONCE IN A WHILE, I'D APPRECIATE IT.

I DON'T MEAN TO MAKE IT SOUND LIKE A CONDITION,

KUREKO-SAN...!

HM?

REALLY, WHENEVER YOU HAVE TIME IS FINE.

SERIOUSLY? THAT WAS QUICK.

AFTER NARROWING THE LIST DOWN TO VALLEY VILLAGES WITH LESS THAN 50% OF THE POPULATION UNDER THE AGE 55, I CAME UP WITH EIGHT CANDIDATES.

MATERIAL HUNTING, HUH? BETTER GET OUT THERE BEFORE SNOW SEASON.

YEAH... SORRY, BUT I'M PROBABLY GONNA HAVE TO TAKE A WEEK OR SO OFF.

AS FOR PHOTOS, I BORROWED SOME FROM BLOGS BY SOLO TRAVELERS AND UNDERPOPULATED GHOST TOWN FANATICS.

FOR PLACES WITH PAVED ROADS, IT MIGHT BE EASIER TO LOOK AROUND WITH STREET VIEWER ONLINE.

I ALSO INCLUDED A NUMBER OF PAGES FROM THE OFFICIAL SITE THAT MIGHT COME IN HANDY.

THIS IS A DOCUMENT REGARDING THE INQUIRY TO THE REGION RESTORATION BUREAU'S VILLAGE CORRESPONDENCE GROUP AND THE LOCAL TOURISM AGENCY.

...

NAH, NAH. I CAN'T DUMP *EVERYTHING* ON YOU.

LET ME KNOW AS SOON AS YOU DECIDE ON A PLACE AND DATE,

THEN I'LL JUST...

SORRY I'M LATE!

MINARE KODA HAS ARRIVED!

I'LL JUST WIND UP A BROKEN MESS.

THAT BEING SAID, IF I'M TOO HARD ON MYSELF...

I KNEW THAT MUCH.

I'M THE KINDA PERSON WHO'S WAY TOO EASY ON MYSELF WITHOUT ORDER AND DISCIPLINE.

MINARE.

I HAVE FAITH THAT THE RADIO INDUSTRY IS MAGNANIMOUS ENOUGH TO ACCEPT ONE SUCH AS I...

UUUGH. SERIOUSLY?

HOW DID I OVERSLEEP MULTIPLE DAYS IN A ROW?

...TO ACCOMPANY KUREKO ON HIS MATERIAL HUNTING TRIP.

I WANT YOU...

LEAVE THE FOLKS AT VOYAGER TO ME.

I'LL TELL THEM WE'LL PLAY A 20-SECOND PLUG FOR THE STORE IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR ABSENCE.

AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, RECORD A LOG OF THE TRIP IN A WAY THAT WON'T JEOPARDIZE THE TRIP.

WHY ME, ANYWAY?! THAT'S LIKE MIXING WATER AND OIL!

JUST BECAUSE I WAS LATE TO THE MEETING, YOU THINK YOU CAN...

WHOA, WHOA, WHOA!

I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT THAT, MATO-SAN.

YOU'LL ALSO BE GOING AS MINARE'S ASSISTANT, NANBA.

WHAT?!

SORRY, MATO, BUT I'D REALLY PREFER TO FLY SOLO...

WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO IF ONE OF US WINDS UP PREGGERS?!

AN EROTIC NOVEL WRITER AND TWO YOUNG, BEAUTIFUL GIRLS ON A HOT SPRINGS TRIP TOGETHER?

MINARE.

HOT SPRING?

UM... OKAY!

IN THAT CASE...

MRS WILL MANAGE WITHOUT YOU FOR A WEEK.

AND MAKING KUREKO HELP WOULD DEFEAT THE PURPOSE.

MINARE WON'T BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH ANY TECHNICAL PROBLEMS BY HERSELF, RIGHT?

YOU COOL SON OF A BITCH...

I HONESTLY THINK YOU'RE BEST SUITED TO FILL THE ROLE OF MOIWAYAMA RADIO'S COMMANDO UNIT.

I FORESEE BLOOD-SHED...

BARELY ANYTHING TO DO WITH RADIO, THOUGH.

SOUNDS LIKE A FUN CONVER-SATION.

HEY! GOOD TIMING.

IT'S GOING TO FEEL LONELY AROUND HERE.

IS THAT SO?

I'M HAVING MINARE AND NANBA GO WITH KUREKO TO GATHER MATERIAL FOR HIS BOOK.

I'LL BE LOOKING AFTER KUREKO-SAN ON-SITE FOR A WEEK.

stare...

GIMME A BREAK...

LUCKY GUY.

AND I WAS SO CLEAR ABOUT NOT LETTING MY WRITING GET IN THE WAY OF THINGS AT THE STATION, TOO.

SIIIGH. WHAT A SNOOZE-FEST.

HANG IN THERE. HE CAN BE SUCH A SLOB.

I LOATHE *YOU*, THOUGH.

DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA.

I'M ACTUALLY RATHER FOND OF NANBA-SAN.

I TEND TO ROOT FOR GIRLS LIKE HER.

well, that's good.

HUH... REALLY?

I WANT TO SEE YOU ABSOLUTELY LOSE YOUR SHIT, CHISHIRO-SAN.

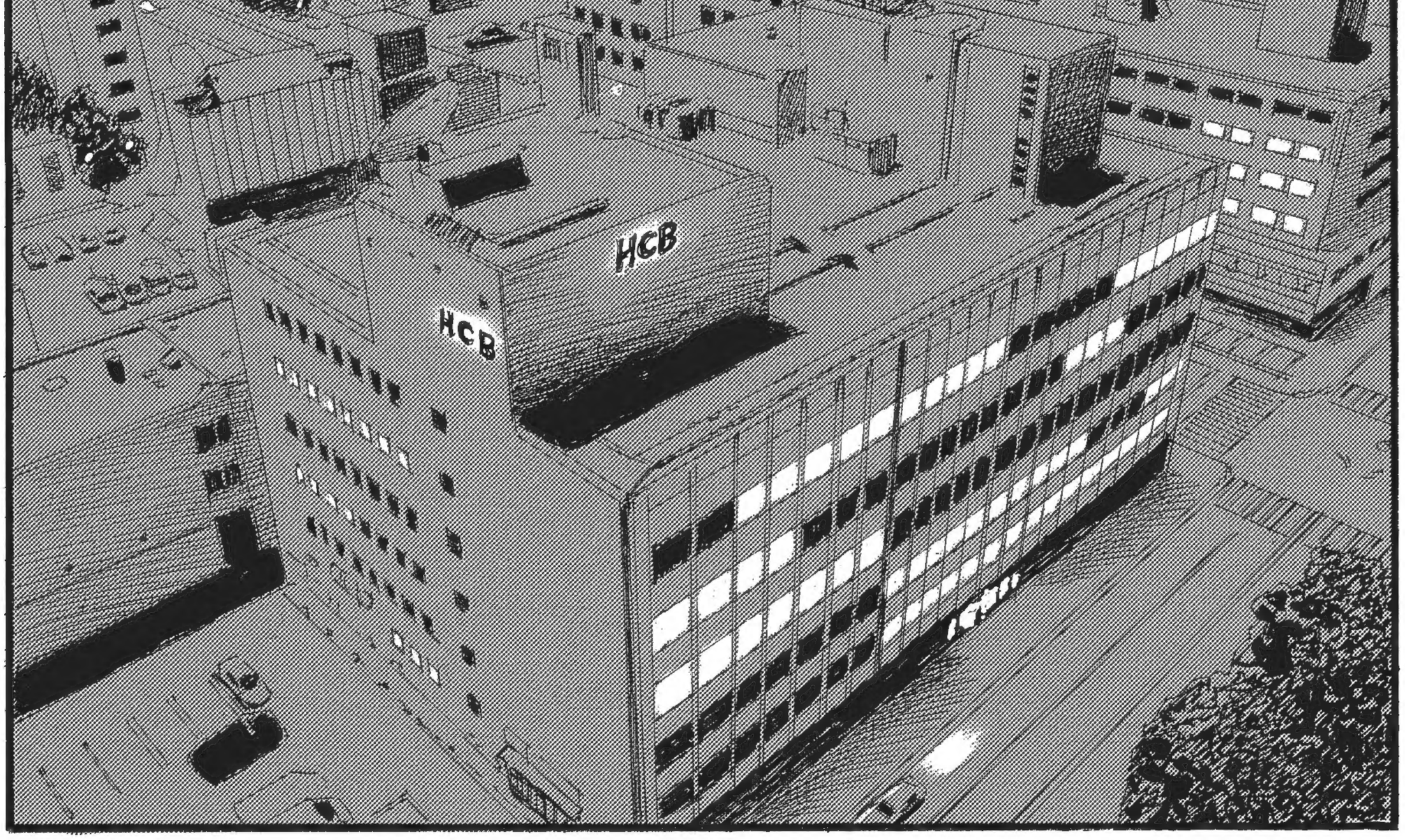
WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO DO THAT ON THE JOB?

OR TURN AROUND AFTER SHARING A HOT AND BOTHERED KISS WITH KUREKO-SAN AND SAY, "THINK YOU CAN PULL THAT OFF, KIDDO?"

CAN'T YOU SAY SOMETHING LIKE, "YOU THIEVING WHORE!"

WITH NOTHING OF THEIR OWN TO SPEAK OF.

PLAIN JANES...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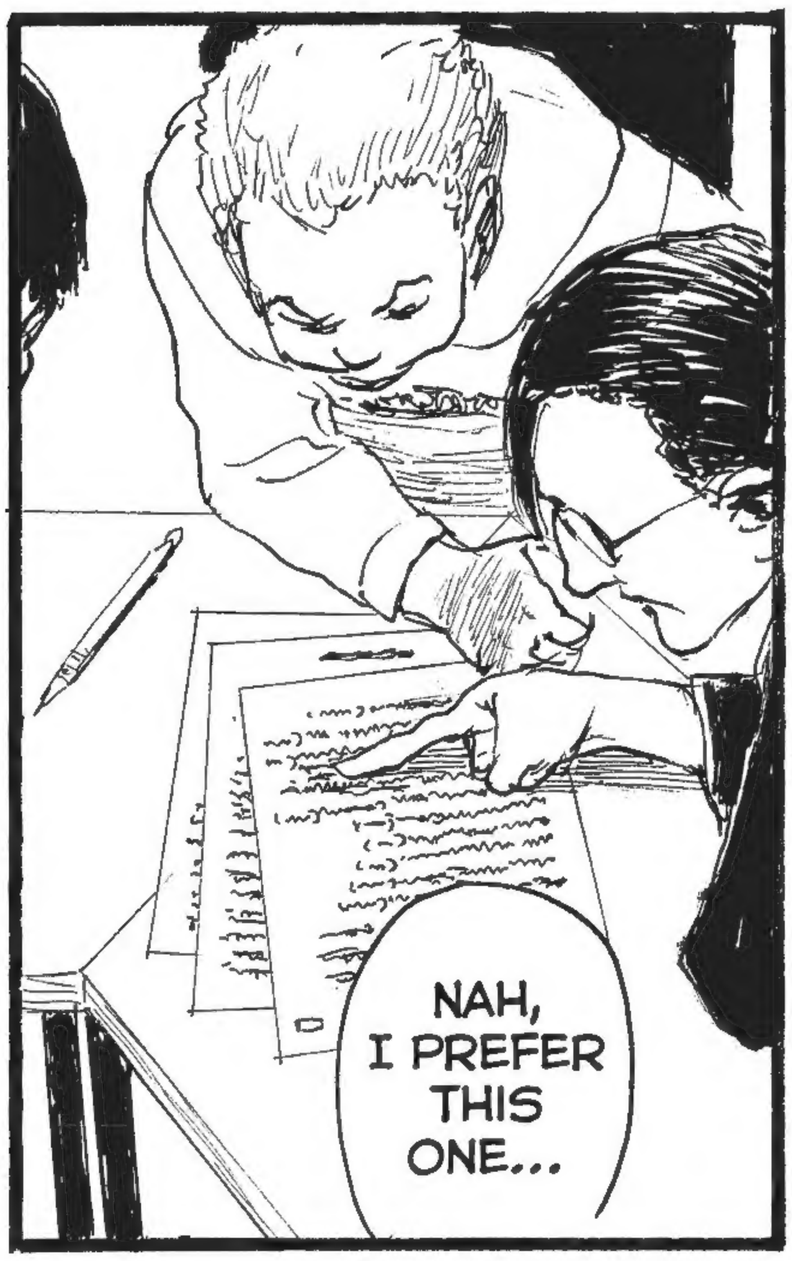
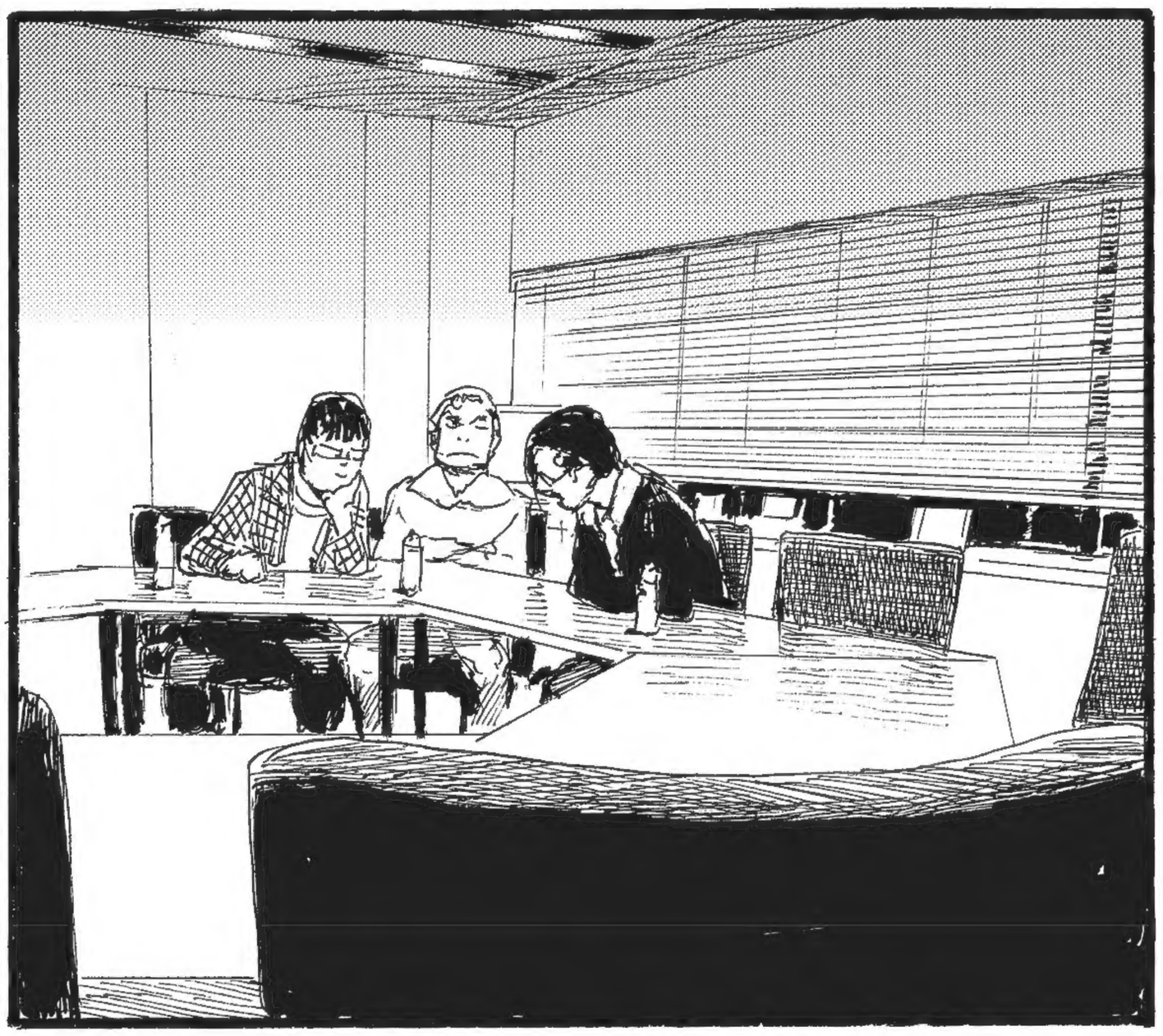

NAH, I PREFER THIS ONE...



HERE'S HOPING IT'S A HIGH SCHOOL GIRL.
SURE THING.
WHEN ARE YOU GONNA GIVE UP?

BADGER-SAN, NISHIKI-SAN.
JOKER SKONSKY IS HERE TO SEE YOU.

OH... I'M SORRY.

FOR REAL? I WAS READY FOR SOME BEEFY DUDE TO WALK THROUGH THE DOOR.

OOH.

OOP.

MY NAME IS TACHIBANA. THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME....